THE

THEATRICAL RECORDER:

BY

THOMAS HOLCROFT.

CONTENTS OF NUMBER IV.

FROM BAD TO WORSE, a Comedy, translated from CALDERON DE LA BARCA, By FANNY HOLCROFT.

REMARKS on that Comedy.

Biography of Calderon de la Barca.

NEW PIECE. Out of Place, or the Lake of Lausanne.

THE ART OF ACTING, an Extract from a new Work by Marmontel; with Remarks on the Manner of Mlle. Clairon, Mrs. Siddons, Mr. Kemble, and Mr. Cooke.

ESSAY ON DRAMATIC COMPOSITION.

Moral Effects of Mysteries and Moralities.

Injurious Prejudices concerning the Unities.

HISTORY OF THE GERMAN STAGE. Lessing. Schlegel. Weisse. Mad. Seyler. Cronegk. Brawe.

DRAMATIC ANECDOTES. Garrick. and Barry.
Essex. School for Scandal.
Mlle. Dumesnil. Sal. Pavy.
Molière and Scaramouch.
Molière and Ass.
Vernon to the Pit.

MISCELLANIES.

Provincial Theatres: Wolverhampton, Stafford, and Kidderminster.

Mr. Quick. Actors and Actresses.

Andrew Birrell, an Engraver and Author.

Custom's Fallacy, a Comedy.

Mrs. H. Johnston.

Foote; a Prologue by that Author.

Costume.

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FROM BAD TO WORSE:

A COMEDY,

IN THREE ACTS,

TRANSLATED FROM

THE SPANISH OF CALDERON DE LA BARCA,

By FANNY HOLCROFT.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DON CESAR URSINO, Florida's Lover.

DON JUAN, betrothed to Lisarda.

THE GOVERNOR OF GAETA.

CAMACHO, } Valets to Don Cesar.
FABIO, }

FELIX, a Servant.

An Alcaide. Servants to the Governor.

Alguazils.

DONNA FLORIDA, betrothed to Cesar.

DONNA LISARDA, betrothed to Juan.

CELIA, } Waiting Women to Lisarda.
NISA, }

FROM BAD TO WORSE:

A COMEDY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

The GOVERNOR, *reading a Letter;* FELIX *in a travelling Dress.*

Governor (*reads*).

" MY dear lord,

" I will relate the particulars of my misfortune without " reserve, being well assured of your sympathy and zeal to " serve me. A gentleman, whose name and person are known " to my domestic, who brings you this, has fled from Naples, " in consequence of an affair of honor. My daughter, who " was the accomplice of his rashness, is the companion of his " flight. I understand that he intends to embark for Spain: " he may perhaps have taken refuge in your port; if so, " arrest the fugitives, but treat them as my children. Though " my honor has been impaired, it is not irrevocably lost."

A confused report of this unfortunate affair had before reached me; and I am greatly obliged to my friend, Don Alonzo, for remembering me on such an occasion. I would give half my estate that the fugitives may have taken shelter in this port; and I call Heaven to witness that the honor of my friends shall be my dearest care. A trust so great should be religiously fulfilled. I am beside indebted to him, for his courtesy to me, in Flanders; and am impatient to return the obligation. But I must know the name of the Cavalier, who has so cruelly wounded his honor, and embittered his peace.

Fel. It is Don Cesar Ursino, Signor; who has killed a Cavalier, and eloped with Donna Florida, whose charms had occasioned the affray, and who the same night was missing. I know Don Cesar by sight; and, if your lordship will grant me a warrant to search the inns, I have little doubt of finding him, for I believe he is concealed in this place.

Gov. I will in person aid your research: but, first tell me, what reason have you to suppose he is in this town?

Fel. I saw one of his domestics, this morning, pass before the inn at which myself and comrade put up: I therefore naturally conclude that Don Cesar cannot be far off.

Gov. Did you follow the man?

Fel. No, my lord, I am known to him; but I desired my comrade not to leave him till he had seen him safe in a house.

Gov. Well, go and learn all you can; then return, and I will take the necessary steps to secure Don Cesar. We must act with prudence; for, if we proceed too rashly, he may evade our search.

Fel. Your caution is excellent, my lord. When I have seen and questioned my comrade, I will attend your lordship*. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—GOVERNOR, *alone.*

Gov. Oh, honor, how brittle art thou in the hands of a yielding woman?

SCENE III.—*Enter* DONNA LISARDA, *and* CELIA *her Attendant.*

Lis. My lord!

Gov. Daughter, where are you going?

Lis. I come to wish you good morning. Is my love irksome to you, honored Sir, that you would leave the house without seeing me? You look disturbed.

Gov. Do not wonder at this unusual gloom; I have a father's heart, and a father's fears. Trembles not the benighted traveller, to pass the spot where foul robbery has been committed? Enters not the mariner, with awe, the gulph where formerly some vessel struck, on treacherous shoals? Shrinks not the bold hunter, when he discerns, by the glimmering light of dawn, the corpse of some poor wretch, mangled by the fierce tiger? Here, like the benighted traveller, I discover certain danger. Here, like the mariner, I see the foundered vessel. Here, like the hunter, I discern the fierce tiger, which lies in wait to destroy me: for, to him who knows how to prize it, honor is all that I have described; and is hourly exposed to treachery, danger, and death. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

Lis. I scarcely know where I am. Perhaps I am discovered, Celia; and my father, by this ambiguous discourse, means to warn me that his honor is endangered.

Cel. May be so, Madam. His manner and words were se-

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* In the original, the valets and waiting-maids use *thou*, and *thee*, as familiarly as their superiors.

rious: he has no doubt heard of your imprudent inclination: and, if I may be allowed to speak, he has great reason to be displeased. You are a heretic in love, at the risk of your honor: you wish to fill Don Cupid's quiver with new arrows; but, were you as jealous, passionate, vain-glorious, and wretched as your fathers and forefathers have been, you would not involve yourself in the difficulties and dangers to which your imprudent frolic with a stranger has exposed you.

Lis. If you knew all, Celia, you might with more reason blame my foolish love; and, since you judge me so severely before you have heard my story, you shall be made acquainted with the whole. His majesty, to recompense my father's valour and services, presented him with this government. He came hither; I accompanied him, and met with universal admiration and respect. But I soon felt myself fettered, by the attention that was paid me. Wherever I went, it was whispered—"There goes the Governor's daughter!" Even, at church, my appearance occasioned a general murmur, and all eyes were upon me. I could never be left to myself a moment: whether cheerful or sad, the town were sure to know it. At length, I grew heartily sick of this homage; for vanity itself may die of an indigestion; and I resolved to forget my rank, and sometimes to walk in the public gardens, where, concealed by my mantle and veil, I could speak and enjoy the freedom which that disguise allows. One day, as I was walking near the sea-shore, thus disguised, I perceived my father among the company. Oh, Heavens! that he should be there on that very day! Struck with alarm, I ran into a garden, where I found a Cavalier, who, seeing me frightened, and perhaps thinking me in danger, drew his sword in my defence. I thanked him for his gallantry, and told him it was unnecessary. In a short conversation, I found that he was not only brave and courteous, but elegant and well informed. I say nothing of his rank; for, when I tell you he has these qualifications, you may infer that he is a gentleman. He requested me to confide my name to him: this I declined, but promised to meet him at the same place in a few days, on condition he would neither attempt to follow me, see my face, nor learn my name. To this he politely assented, and, shall I confesss it, I kept the appointment. Whether he lives incognito, or whether he is detained a prisoner, I cannot say: I only know his name is Don Fabio*. For my part, all I seek is to amuse myself, without prejudice to my honor. He is nearly a stranger to me; yet, setting aside prudery, I—think I love him. No, no; the new sensations I feel are not love: they are incomprehensible to myself. But I see no reason that what my father said should induce me, whether I am or am not in love, to visit the young Cavalier no more.

* Don Cesar Ursino: the false name is supposed to be for safety's sake.

Cel. I dread the consequences of these follies. Recollect, Signora, that you are betrothed; and that your bridegroom is daily expected. Your father has ordered the suit of apartments next yours to be prepared for his reception.

Lis. Alas, Celia, I may now with better reason complain of my cruel destiny.

SCENE V.—*Enter* NISA.

Nisa. A handsome lady, who appears to be a stranger, requests to speak with you, Signora.

Lis. What is her name?

Nisa. She did not tell me.

Lis. Show her in. [*Exit.*

SCENE VI.—*Enter* DONNA FLORIDA, *veiled.*

Flor. Thus lowly bending, the ground I touch will be to me as the long wished-for port to the weather-beaten mariner, if I am suffered to kiss that beauteous hand. (*unveiling and kneeling.*)

Lis. Rise, fair lady: the earth is unworthy to receive the brightest constellation of heaven *.

Flor. Were I indeed a constellation, you are the heaven above me, and command my respect. Nay, were I your equal in beauty, my hapless fortune would liken me to the modest moon, while you reigned queen of the stars.

Cel. (*aside*) This lady is at no loss for words.

Lis. I rejoice not to suppose myself a sun, which emits its golden rays to illuminate your beauty; but kind nature rather has made you a planet, and me your satellite. Tell me in what can I serve you?

Flor. I implore your pity and protection.

Lis. Perhaps you wish to be more private?

Flor. No: that which hereafter must be known should now be told.

Lis. Speak, Madam.

Flor. I will be brief. You, charming Lisarda, who are as discreet as you are beautiful, ought to know that your favors are worthily dispensed: for, when fortune frowns, the world is apt to judge the poor suppliant with asperity. I am a woman, and as such implore that compassion which the noble never refuse. Oh that he were here who knows the truth of the melancholy tale, which dies on my faltering tongue! But in his absence let these eyes, which, like two fountains, overflow and inundate my cheeks with tears, be the pledge of my veracity! I am the daughter of a nobleman, whose name

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* The Spanish is every where rather more than less florid than the translation.

respect bids me conceal: for I would not spread the dishonor, which is brought upon it, by my imprudence. Among the numerous gentlemen, who sought my favor, was a Cavalier, who, in birth and fortune, was my equal. From the hour when Phebus bedecked his golden tresses with rosy wreaths, till, reclined on the snow-white surge, he esteemed the wide ocean a bed too narrow for his glorious rays, this gentleman enlivened the street in which I lived with serenades, and every gallant show. He was the sun-flower, that graced my windows: a sun-flower by day, but at night an Argus, to whose tenderness and honor, in the face of Heaven, I intrusted my person, and pledged my faith. You will make allowance for my weakness, for I am a woman; and you doubtless know how grateful adoration is to our sex. Thus, for a while, fortune smiled on our love; and those happy moments which mutual confidence secure to faithful hearts were ours! Alas, mystery and danger enhance the lover's joys. A garden was the temple in which we plighted our vows; and the myrtle and jessamine were mute witnesses to my tender fears and doubts. Who would have thought that love so gentle so soon should prove my torment? Or that a fearful tempest lowered beneath so sweet a calm? A noble Cavalier, when my faith and love were no longer mine to bestow, thought proper to pay his court to me. I treated him with disdain whenever he passed my windows. By watching, he at length discovered that my severity toward him did not proceed so much from decorum, as from a preoccupied heart, and he resolved to take a cruel revenge for slighted love. One gloomy night, when the moon was half concealed by clouds, he came a little before my lover to the garden gate, gave the usual signal, and I let him in. Cruel fate, for this unlucky moment brought my betrothed, who, seeing a man enter, guided by the lamp of night, which proved to be the torch of death, in words scarcely articulate demanded—who he was, and what he wanted? The stranger, without vouchsafing a reply, covered his face and laid his hand on his sword. More dead than alive, I was going to answer for him, but their swords were already drawn: never did angry comets, crossing each other in the disturbed heavens, dart quicker fire than that which flamed on the sharp-edged steel. By the will of Providence (or say it was my destiny) the stranger at the first thrust was mortally wounded. "I am a dead man," he cried, and fell lifeless on a bed of withered violets, which, living, had decked the throne of love, and now adorned the couch of death. My lover, seeing him fall, cried to me in a faltering voice—"Now caress your favorite, faithless woman, who sought you at such an hour, and who there lies weltering in his blood! Nor am I sure that one life ought to satisfy revenge!"

Trembling and confused, I attempted to justify myself; but the jealous are deaf to reason. He hurried out of the gar-

den, mounted a horse (shall I say with wings, he flew so fast) and was out of hearing in an instant. I remained in a stupor of grief, from which I was roused by the neighbours and servants, who had been alarmed by the noise and the voice of my father, who called on my name. Not having the courage to meet his anger, I gave no answer; but, resolved to fly, rushed out of the garden, and, with a distracted heart, took refuge at the house of a female friend, with whom I remained concealed for some days. I heard, mean time, my lover had fled to a sea-port, intending to embark for Spain. This made me quit my native city, in the hope of finding and convincing him of my innocence: but hitherto I have not been able to discover any traces of my beloved Cavalier; and, being aware of the dangers to which a woman unprotected is exposed in so wild a chace, I determined to renounce the mad attempt. The fame of your amenity reached my ears, and I hoped to live in honorable obscurity under your protection. Your domestics are numerous; one more added to the number can make little difference, and you are too noble to suffer one of your own sex and rank to be exposed to insult, and injury. Confirm my hopes, dear lady, lighten my woes, and relieve my fears! You are a woman: as such, grant me your favor and protection, and may you never love, or be your love propitious——

Lis. Rise, fair lady; dry your tears, or Aurora will complain that you usurp her office. Your beauty guarantees the reality of your misfortunes. What is your name?

Flor. Laura.

Lis. Remain then, Laura, with me; not to serve, but to be served. Now retire to my apartments, for my father must not see you, till I have obtained his permission to receive you as my guest.

Flor. Good angels guard you! Cruel fortune, be satisfied with the woes thou hast already inflicted! [*Exit.*

Cel. Though compassion is laudable, I doubt the prudence, Signora, of admitting this stranger lady into your house.

Lis. What are your doubts?

Cel. Why, I doubt if the world can produce a woman, virgin or widow, servant or mistress, who will be sincere, when she thinks it her interest to be the reverse. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII.

Scene changes to a Garden behind a House, with a Back Door in View.

DON CESAR, DON JUAN *in a travelling Dress.*

Don J. I am fortunate indeed in coming to this *Quinta**, since I find you so unexpectedly here, Don Cesar.

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* *Quinta* signifies a house of entertainment, with gardens, a little way out of the city.

Don C. My good fortune brought you hither! Once again let me embrace my friend!

Don J. Death alone can dissolve our friendship! But what do you here?

Don C. My story is long and melancholy. You come from Flanders, or you would not be unacquainted with it.

Don J. I had heard you were in difficulties, and am surprised to find you here apparently so satisfied.

Don C. I am far from being at ease, Don Juan: fear and suspicion are my tormentors; and if your heart had not been known to me, I would not have seen you. I am concealed here, till I can embark for Spain. The master of this house formerly served me, and I can depend on his honesty; but, should any stranger come, a boat is kept in readiness, and I can put immediately to sea.

Don J. My arrival is fortunate, since I may serve you. I am a person of some consequence in Gaeta; for I am come to be the fortunate lover and husband of the illustrious Lisarda, who is noble, beauteous, and amiable: in short, she is the only daughter of Don Juan of Arragon. Dismiss your fears; my intended father-in-law is governor of this place, and captain of the king's forces. Beside, the judicial rank of my own father will enable me to befriend you.

Don C. Thanks, my noble friend! I have not now to learn how much I owe you: may you be fortunate in your love, and may you enjoy many happy years! But now, tell me, what brought you to this house, my friend?

Don J. I wished to pass the day here, and divert myself. I have come to Gaeta like a soldier, ill provided with jewels and such-like gallantries; and, though I am very well for a soldier, I have not the appearance of a bridegroom. I therefore propose to remain two days incognito, and not to see my mistress till I am properly equipped.

Don C. How fortunate I am! You can spend these two days with me.

Don J. I would with pleasure, but the alcaide of the fortress is my friend: I have sent him word of my arrival, and expect him here every moment to fetch me. As you must not be seen, I will go and meet him.

Don C. Your caution is prudent.

Don J. Adieu, Don Cesar. I will not fail to visit you in secret, and you may rely on my zeal to serve you. [*Exit.*

SCENE VIII.—*Enter* CAMACHO.

Cam. Master of mine, your heart I see is in deep soliloquy, your senses and your conscience are in rebellion, and thought has played the devil with memory and common sense. Who is now the sovereign of your thoughts, Signor? The absent

Donna Florida, or the Incognita, who is cousin-german to the Prince of Darkness.

Don C. Your jokes were always ill-timed, and they are now more impertinent than ever.

Cam. What offends you, Signor?

Don C. That you should ask who is the sovereign of my thoughts. Who can it be, if not the lovely Florida?

Cam. If you love her so entirely, why do you engage in a new intrigue?

Don C. Because I am banished from happiness and her charms.

Cam. And, she being absent, you are willing to find a substitute? Such are the ways of man! Ah! and of woman too.

Don C. In one fatal night, I lost my country and my mistress.

Cam. You have done a thing for which every body blames you, Signor.

Don C. For killing my rival?

Cam. No.

Don C. What then?

Cam. For having secured your own safety, and left your mistress to meet the consequences of your rashness.

Don C. It was wrong, Camacho. Yet let those who accuse me love passionately, and find their mistress with another man, then, if they conquer their feelings and act rationally, at so trying a moment, I will plead guilty. Could such an extreme case happen again, I should know how to act; for a man cannot twice commit the same fault. But what is become of Florida?

Cam. Do you forget, Sir, that a traveller informed you, on your first arrival, she had retired to a convent in Naples? But here comes the lady knight errant, who, like the wolf in the fable, does not stand on ceremony.

SCENE IX.

Enter LISARDA *and* CELIA, *both veiled and in Disguise.*

Don C. As Phœbus, veiled in burnished clouds, gives life and harmony to enamelled plains, so you, bright sun, with rays invisible, revive those languid flowers, which hail you queen of love*.

Lis. Your courtesy I, courtier-like, will answer. These flowers, if they greet me with so flattering a homage, have been taught by you, who are the mirror of gallantry.

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* These mixed metaphors and florid phrases are retained in the translation as characteristic of the author, and of Spanish poetry.

Don C. Since the time you first honored me with your amiable presence, I learned from them how to love, and how to sigh. It is a mistake to suppose they need instructions: every flower has a favorite blossom: it is the breath of love which fans the budding rose. Since all acknowledge the gentle sway of love, do not think me a flatterer.

Lis. Nay, you are a flatterer.

Don C. In what?

Lis. In pretending to love me, though you have never seen my face.

Don C. Is it then impossible to love, without seeing a lady's face?

Lis. Yes.

Don C. I feel the contrary.

Lis. How?

Don C. Very forcibly. Can a blind man love?

Lis. He can.

Don C. As such, then, I love.

Lis. The man who never saw can have no desire to see, and he loves from reflection; but no man having eyes will fall in love in the dark. Not seeing my face, you cannot love.

Don C. By Heaven, you are mistaken! Love so conceived is the more durable.

Lis. It will require some ingenuity to prove your assertion.

Don C. The object most dazzling to a rational mind is the light of the understanding; and this luminary I adore in you. If I had beheld the radiant beauties of your face, my love would have been divided between the charms of your person and the attraction of your wit, and consequently would be less solid. Judge then if I would change rational affection for one less dignified.

Lis. Nay, were your eyes no less fascinated than you say your heart is, your love would but increase.

Don C. I cannot see how!

Lis. If oil be poured on the blue blaze, does it therefore cease to burn? Love is a fire; and, like the mingling brands, our eyes add fuel to the flame.

Cam. (*to* Celia, *concealing his face*) Fair nymph!

Cel. Well?

Cam. Do you, sweet chamber-maid, think fit to imitate your betters? Am I not to see your face?

Cel. No.

Cam. Then we'll be quits: as I am a man of honor, you shall not see mine.

Cel. The thought is excellent!

Cam. Now, by St. Jago, we are face to face in masquerade; and I resign you to Lucifer. If ever you wish to uncover, may his sooty highness, of gigantic stature, spread your mantle in vast circumference wherever you go! May this mantle

stick to you like wax! May its rare amplitude enamour Garamanto! And, for your eternal punishment, may Radamanthus condemn you never to quit it in the regions below.

Don C. You have conquered, lady. Since it is your creed that Cupid's darts take the surest aim from the eyes, you will not think me rude if I offer to lift up your veil.

Lis. Forbear!

Don C. Excuse me, Signora, but I must see your face.

Lis. You may, with this proviso: that you will never see the owner more.

Don C. I am amazed! Methinks the adventure of Cupid and Psyche is in us renewed; or rather reversed. Love, it is said, concealed himself from the idolizing nymph; whereas the Psyche I adore conceals herself from idolizing Love! Throw aside that black veil which is the eclipse of beauty; and, if it is a merit to be fair assert your claims. This envious veil may be a cloud of glory to you, but to me it is the mantle of Pluto.

Lis. Your arguments are very subtile; but again I tell you, if you persist in this boldness, your hopes will end in nothing*, for I will return no more.

Don C. Be the consequence what it will, I must see your face.

Lis. (*unveiling*) Then, look. You see.

Don C. (*in admiration*) Yes! And I cannot imagine why you should selfishly debar poor mortals from the light of the sun. But what noise is that? [*A noise heard within.*

Lis. It is several persons speaking at once.

SCENE X.—*Enter* FABIO.

Don C. What is the matter, Fabio?

Fab. Fly, Signor! The boat is ready: the Governor is come, in person, to seize you.

Don C. Most likely he has heard of my being here.

Lis. (*aside*) Merciful Heavens! My father! What will become of me? It was not without a meaning he spoke this morning.

Don C. What shall I do?

Cam. Put to sea, and row with might and main.

Don C. Adieu, fair lady! My misfortunes force me to fly.

Lis. Your flight will accelerate mine.

Don C. What is it you wish?

Lis. If you are, as you seem to be, a gentleman, do not desert a woman, whose imprudence in coming to see you exposes her honor and her life. I am not what you perhaps

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* In the original there is a play upon the word *humo*; which, in one place, signifies *silk*, or *crape*; and in the other *smoke*.

think me; if you leave me defenceless, my death and disgrace are certain. I am pursued, and there is no way to escape.

Don C. (*aside*) Fortune goes from bad to worse! A man may be hurried into error, and be forgiven; but to commit it deliberately admits of no excuse: it shall not again be said that I desert a lady in distress. (*aloud*) Signora, I will protect you with my life. Conceal yourself in the house: I will remain here to guard you; but it is me they seek, not you.

Lis. Quick, Celia, into the house!

[Lisarda *and* Celia *hurry into the house:* Celia *drops her clogs.*

Don C. (*to* Camacho) Take up these clogs.

Cam. A pretty legacy, truly. (*He takes up the clogs and hides himself behind the door of the house.*)

SCENE XI.

Enter Governor, *followed by* Alguazils *and* Servants.

Gov. Are you Don Cesar Ursino?

Don C. A gentleman never denies his name.

Gov. You are my prisoner.

Don C. I submit; but pray remember my rank.

Gov. I do: you need not deliver your sword. There is a lady with you, whom I must likewise, paying due respect to her sex and rank, detain a prisoner.

Don C. A lady?

Gov. Yes.

Don C. A lady here?

Gov. It is in vain to deny it. I have certain intelligence that she is concealed in that house.

Don C. (*aside*) Heavens! Who can this woman be, who has thrown me into these difficulties?

SCENE XII.

The Alguazils *enter the House and drag out* Camacho.

Alg. Here is a man hid behind the door.

[*Exit with his Followers into the house.*

Gov. Who are you?

Cam. The faithful squire of this unfortunate knight.

Gov. Why did you hide yourself?

Cam. Not with any evil design, my lord. I have a foolish trick of hiding myself.

Gov. What have you there?

Cam. Only a pair of clogs, your lordship.

Gov. So, so! These are indications that what I seek is not far off. Where is the owner?

Cam. Here, and please your lordship.

Gov. What, do you wear clogs?

Cam. Shields of cork, I believe, are forbidden, by the just laws of this kingdom, but not clogs Unfortunate is the sick man, saith a divine proverb, who is without clogs of cork.

SCENE XIII.—*Re-enter* Alguazils, *leading in* LISARDA, *veiled.*

1st Alg. We found this lady in a chamber. (*to* Lisarda) Please to be unveiled, Signora.

Gov. Silence! Lady, do not unveil. I know the respect which is due to your quality, and am sorry that I am obliged to detain you a prisoner.

Don C. My lord, my life is yours, but I cannot suffer that lady to be dishonoured.

Gov. Your tone is too lofty, Don Cesar: it is easier to talk than act. I will excuse your rashness, because of the interest I take in the welfare of that lady. Her father is my friend, and I feel a father's concern for her honor.

Lis. (*aside*) To what will this lead? I fear ruin is certain.

Don C. I had no intention, my lord, to turn your courtesy against yourself: neither would I make a boast of holding life cheap, since it is easy to die.

Gov. Come, Signor, be guided by my prudence and friendly counsel: I do not come as a judge, but as a mediator, who is acquainted with your story.

Don C. I know I have offended against the laws, and am your prisoner; but what has the lady done?

Gov. Do not think you can impose on me: I act from unquestionable information. You, Don Cesar, must follow me to the fortress, where you must remain a prisoner. The lady shall be conducted to my house, and treated in every respect as my own daughter.

Lis. (*aside*) Alas, what is it I hear? Yet it will be less difficult to soften his anger when he is alone. (*aside to* Don Cesar) Signor, I agree to that proposal.

Don C. (*to* Lisarda) If so, I am satisfied. My lord, I accept your offer. The lady, you say, will be received in your house?

Gov. I have pledged my word. (*calls*) Alguazil.

Alg. My lord!

Gov. Conduct the lady in my coach, to my daughter, Lisarda; and tell your lady I beg she will receive her kindly, and keep her company. I must convey Don Cesar to the fortress. [*The* Alguazils *lead off* Lisarda.

Don C. I attend you, my lord, and think myself much honored by your courtesy.

[*Exeunt* Governor, Don Cesar, *and* Servants.

SCENE XIV.—*Manet* CAMACHO, *and enter* CELIA.

Cel. Is she gone?
Cam. Yes.
Cel. Then I will run home.
Cam. Whoever your mistress may be, by St. Jago you may well rejoice! [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Saloon in the* GOVERNOR'S *Palace.* NISA, CELIA.

Nisa.

HOW, Celia! Returned alone? Where is our lady? You are silent! What ails you?
Cel. I am half dead with fright!
Nisa. What has happened?
Cel. Why, we were—but I hear footsteps! I will tell you presently.

SCENE II.

Enter Alguazils *and* Servants, *leading* LISARDA, *who is still veiled.*

1*st Alg.* Make way!
Nisa. (*aside*) Santa Maria! Is it not my lady?
1*st Alg.* I must speak with the lady Lisarda. I bring a message from my lord the Governor.
Cel. (*aside*) Now, wit assist me!—My lady is indisposed; you cannot see her. Deliver your message.
1*st Alg.* My lord entreats her ladyship to receive this Signora kindly, and to keep her company.
Cel. I will not omit one syllable of what you say.
2*d Alg.* Hark ye, young woman! (*aside to* Celia) This lady we bring is a prisoner: inform your mistress that my lord begs she will take great care of her.
[*Exeunt* Alguazils *and* Servants.

SCENE III.

Nisa. (*to* Celia) Is it my lady?
Cel. Yes.
Lis. Take my veil, Celia. Do you, Nisa, give me that mantle.

Nisa. What strange masquerade is this? You, my lady, a prisoner in your own house, and committed to your own custody? Pray, dear lady, explain this enigma! I am dying with curiosity.

Lis. Alas, fortune and love have conspired to make me wretched! This morning, my father very cautiously gave me to understand that he had heard of my passion. I, imprudent as I was, paying little attention to his sage warning, went out this evening; he followed me, and I was taken.

Cel. Banish so wild a thought, Signora. Is it possible that a man of your father's prudence could have known this, and, instead of preventing you from continuing the intrigue, have taken the means to publish his own and your disgrace? No, Signora; my only fear was that he should have discovered us before we reached home; but, now we are safe at home, my fears are over. He, no doubt, came thither in search of some lady, and took you to be her.

Lis. You speak without thinking. Did he not say he felt a *father's* concern for the honor of the lady? Did he not dissemble his anger? Did he not forbid me to unveil? These precautions could not have been taken for a stranger! It is in vain to argue; he certainly knew me.

Cel. And what do you mean to do?

Lis. To throw myself at his feet, the moment he returns; for, let it come to the worst, a father will not kill his child; and to tell him I went to that garden for recreation.

SCENE IV.—*Enter* FLORIDA.

Flor. I am glad you are returned, Signora.

Lis. (*aside*) I will not trust her: I am not sufficiently acquainted with her disposition. (*aloud*) I have been to visit a friend.

SCENE V.

Enter the GOVERNOR, *and* FELIX, *who keeps in the Back-ground.*

Gov. Return immediately to Naples, and tell your master that his daughter, Florida, is my guest; and that her lover is a prisoner in the fortress.

Fel. Good, my lord; but there is one objection: I did not follow your lordship into the garden, and the lady who came out was veiled, so that I cannot be certain it was my young lady. It is not possible, under that disguise, to distinguish one person from another, and I might be mistaken.

Gov. Your precaution is just: come forward, and speak to her.

Fel. It will be better that she should not see me, because she will look upon me as a spy, and a mischief-maker; and,

though a servant must obey his master, there is no reason he should make himself odious to the rest of the family. If I can see her without her seeing *me*, I shall run no such risk.

Gov. Well, come with me. Yonder is my daughter.

Fel. And the lady on her left hand is Donna Florida! That is sufficient, my lord.

Gov. Yes, it is her, beyond a doubt; for the other women are my daughter's attendants.

Fel. I return to Naples contented. My lord, I am your humble servant. [*Exit.*

SCENE VI.—*The* GOVERNOR *advances toward the Ladies.*

Cel. Here is my lord!

Flor. (*to* Lisarda) If this opportunity be favorable, dear lady, speak to him of me, and ask his permission to receive me in your house.

Lis. I will.

Flor. Exert all your influence.

Lis. Retire to the window. (Florida *retires.*)

Gov. Well, Lisarda, are you not delighted with the new friend I sent you? You are silent!

Lis. (*aside*) I shall expire!—My lord, if your child is not totally unworthy to petition for——

Gov. Do not tease me with your importunities; it cannot be.

Lis. Surely, my lord, so venial a fault may be forgiven?

Gov. It is not so venial as you think.

Flor. (*aside*) How earnestly she pleads! Her father's eye is continually on me.

Lis. Was it then a crime to go incognito to a public garden?

Gov. A crime! A father's honor ought to be held sacred.

Lis. Your just reproof penetrates my soul. My lord, on my knees I implore your forgiveness.

Gov. Do you think I am angry with you, because I deny your request? Believe me, child, it is only from necessity.

Lis. I will not rise till you are moved by my sorrow.

Flor. How much I owe her!

Gov. My dear Lisarda, I cannot comply. No door shall be unlocked, till the church has made all secure.

Lis. I will not so much as look through the lattice, only make me happy in your affection.

Gov. Nothing is more easy, my child. That you may be convinced how dear you are to me, listen to the reception I shall give your friend. (*to* Florida) You are welcome, young lady, to my house, which I beg you will consider as your own. I am not a severe censor of the follies of love; neither am I surprised at the accidents which have befallen you, as they are frequent in such adventures. Here you will be safe and happy,

for you shall not quit my house, till you are honorably married. If my respect for yourself were even less, the earnest entreaties of my daughter, whom I tenderly love, would induce me to protect you with my life.

Lis. Heavens! What is it I hear?

Cel. (*aside to* Lisarda) You see, Signora, how mistaken you were, in supposing that your father knew you; since he thinks she was the prisoner!

Lis. (*to* Celia) Fortune, most unexpectedly, has turned evil into good! Oh that she may not change!

Flor. (*aside*) Lisarda has related my history, to induce her father the more readily to grant me an asylum. Excellent idea! I am spared the shame of telling it myself. (*aloud*) My lord!

Cel. (*aside*) Would she were silent! She will spoil all, I fear.

Flor. The virtuous and noble are ever the protectors of helpless woman! Behold one at your feet: since you are informed of my unhappy story, take pity on a distressed stranger, and preserve her honor.

Lis. (*to her women*) Nisa, Celia, what is this? By what lucky accident is evil thus converted into good?

Flor. (*to* Lisarda) To you, beauteous Lisarda, my obligations are infinite. You not only have received me with kindness, but have exerted your influence with your honored father in my behalf. I owe you my life.

Lis. (*aside*) Her words are ambiguous! I will favor the mistake. (*aloud*) The obligation is mine, not yours, my dear friend. All the influence I possess is at your command.

Gov. You shall find it is great: I will do all I can.

[*Exeunt* Florida *and* Nisa.

SCENE VII.

Lis. As we ought to proceed cautiously, in this affair, pray tell me, dear Sir, who this lady is?

Gov. Her birth and family are noble; she eloped with a Cavalier. You see, by her example, to what dangers indiscretion may expose your sex.

Lis. (*aside*) Alas! I tremble yet.

SCENE VIII.—*Enter a* Servant.

Serv. My lord, a Cavalier, booted and spurred, asks to see you.

Gov. It is Don Juan.

Lis. (*aside*) Here is a new torment.

SCENE IX.—*Enter* DON JUAN, *booted and spurred.*

Don J. I am most happy, my lord, that you esteemed me worthy of the honor I now enjoy, in being permitted to kiss your hand. However fortune may have given me cause of complaint, in delaying my happiness so long, the pleasure I now receive fully compensates for her cruelty.

Gov. You are most welcome, Don Juan. We have been for some days in impatient expectation of your arrival: you have given us much anxiety.

Don J. Being happily arrived, I will not consume the time in vain regret.

Gov. How gallantly you look the soldier! But you do not speak to Lisarda?

Don J. I am mute with admiration! My senses are entranced! Her eyes are brilliant suns! (*to* Lisarda, *taking her hand*) Beautiful Lisarda, if it be not too much presumption, let me take this fair hand; the quiver in which Love stores his keenest arrows, since it rivals the virgin snow, not melted by the rays of Phœbus! Report had taught me to expect you were lovely; but I find you beyond all praise! You alone can accuse Fame of speaking in modest terms. Yet, no; your beauty is acknowledged to be incomparable. If I am confused, you must impute it to your matchless perfections.

Lis. I have often heard that Love, whom the poets feign blind, was the son of Mars and Venus: I now can believe it, since a soldier can flatter. Others have affirmed that Adonis was the father of Love: nor can I deny it, since, with the valour of Mars, you combine the graces of Adonis.

Gov. A truce to compliments: the palm is due to Lisarda.

Don J. Who can stand in competition with her? How lovely is her person! How charming are her manners!

Gov. I will show you to your apartment: you must be weary. I will not apologize for the plain accommodation you will find; you are a soldier, and will excuse it.

Don J. Excuse! Am I not in the sanctuary of a divinity?

[*Exeunt* Don Juan *and* Governor.

SCENE X.

Lis. Since we are left a moment free, tell me, Celia, what you think of my adventure?

Cel. Your fears and danger are now happily past. But how came your father to suppose the strange lady his prisoner?

Lis. Seeing a stranger here, it was natural enough he should draw that inference.

Cel. I saw your fears were vain.

Lis. 'Tis most extraordinary! Though totally ignorant of the lady's history, my answers were applicable.

Cel. Affairs of love are so alike!

Lis. I've now another fear.

Cel. Since you have escaped the worst, and your bridegroom is arrived, ought you to think of any thing but joy?

Lis. How littel, Celia, do you know the force of love! Difficulties, in a thousand instances, do but increase its violence. I cannot endure that a gentleman, to whose generosity I am so much indebted, should languish in confinement: neither will I, should he, as I fear, prove to be the Cavalier of Laura, cherish an improper love. I will clear up this cruel doubt. You shall carry him a note from me, inviting him to come and see me to-morrow night, if he can bribe or elude the vigilance of his guards. I will continue the deception and receive him, not in my own character, but as the lady, whom he supposes to be a prisoner.

Cel. Dear lady, be advised!

Lis. Expostulation is in vain.

Cel. Reflect——

Lis. I am resolved.

Cel. For once, be persuaded.

Lis. Would you see me die?

Cel. Consider——

Lis. Be silent.

Cel. The danger——

Lis. I see it.

Cel. Your life——

Lis. Is indifferent to me.

Cel. Your honor——

Lis. My honor? Ridiculous fear!

Cel. I am anxious——

Lis. For what?

Cel. Your good. I fear——

Lis. What is it you fear?

Cel. Your ruin!

Lis. You intend then to make a solitary pilgrimage to the Holy Land?

Cel. How so?

Lis. As the only chambermaid, who was vexed to see her mistress in love. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE XI.—*Changes to the Fortress.* Don Cesar; Camacho.

Cam. Your gallantry, Sir, has brought us into an enviable situation!

Don C. Did you see her? The sight of such a face cannot be too dearly bought.

Cam. St. Jago defend me from her face! It were better she had been ugly; you would not then have been gallant, and we should not be here. But her malicious eyes have set the spells of justice upon us.

Don C. Blasphemer!

Cam. Nay, Signor, if you are angry, it ought to be with that angel of malice! It was not accident that introduced her to us; she came with mischief in her heart, and a plausible tale at her tongue's end, of danger and death to entrap you, Sir, a loyal knight, and me, a faithful squire. You believe in the authenticity of her nobility? Think no more of it, Signor: we are not in fairy land, where fell magicians, captive princesses, enchanted forests, and adventurous knights, are met with at every step.

Don C. If she were not a person of consequence, why should the Governor detain her a prisoner?

Cam. To get a clear riddance of her.

Don. C. No, Camacho; I have a different suspicion: she most probably is a woman of rank, who has been unfortunate: for merit and beauty are no guard against the malice of fortune. The secrecy she observes, and the pursuit of the Governor, confirm me in this opinion. The latter, no doubt, was informed of her being at the garden, at the same time that he discovered my retreat. How touching was her distress, when she implored my protection! How unwillingly she made the discovery of her rank!

Cam. You are eloquent, Sir. By this circumlocution, no doubt, you mean to say that Donna Florida, and her faithful affection, are forgotten?

Don C. Forgotten? Oh, no! Never, never can the first attachment of my heart change! The painter, about to begin a portrait, can easily sketch an outline, if the canvass be untouched. But, if outlines have already been traced, he cannot proceed, till they are obliterated. The divine image of my adorable Florida is engraven on my heart; and, till it is erased, no other can make any lasting impression.

Cam. Oh, I'll answer for that, if we should again be visited by this veiled sorceress. Something assures me, we have not yet done with the agents of darkness.

SCENE XII.—*Enter* CELIA, *veiled.*

Cel. Signor Fabio?

Don C. You come timely, to bring life and consolation to a wretch almost exhausted.

Cel. Here is a note from the lady, who was taken prisoner with you, and who languishes in sorrow.

Don C. Take this diamond*, and let it grace the hand which brings me so fair a gift.

* A part of this speech, in the Spanish, is so far-fetched that it is unintelligible: it is, literally, "son of the sun, which would be a wandering star if, like a gilded ornament, it should be seen placed in the eighth zenith."

Cam. Will you show me its colour!

Cel. No!

Cam. I have a diamond the twin to that; let me see your face and it shall be yours.

Cel. No.

Cam. Oh! Then your face is——

Cel. Ugly, do you think?

Cam. Why, if it were handsome, you would not hide it.

Cel. Look, then! Is it so very disagreeable.

Cam. I don't wish to see it. (*turns away his head.*)

Cel. Impertinence!

Cam. You are unwilling to show, and I to be shown.

Cel. You shall have the diamond, if you will look.

Cam. I am inexorable.

Don C. (*to* Celia) My lovely prisoner shall be obeyed.

Cel. Fare you well. [*Exit.*

Cam. Adieu, my Infanta! Tell your mistress the pitcher that goes so often to the well is at last broken. (*to* Don Cesar) Well, Signor, what says the note? Any new mischief in cogitation?

Don C. She tells me to visit her this night, and that she has bribed the women of Donna Lisarda to introduce me into the Governor's house; to which she adds a thousand unnecessary cautions, such as to come alone, and to be secret.

Cam. And you freely promised to go, having no doubt the keys of this prison in your pocket?

Don C. What should prevent me?

Cam. The guards.

Don C. A bribe will set the most vigilant to sleep.

SCENE XIII.—*Enter* Don Juan.

Don J. I come, Don Cesar, to condole with you; while you have to congratulate me. According to naturalists, there are two poisons, which, when mixed, are not only harmless but nutritive. Now good and ill fortune are both poisons, which, taken separately, may be fatal. You are weighed down by sorrow; I am oppressed with joy: let us then join stock, and make a fair equilibrium.

Don C. You are content then, Don Juan?

Don J. Oh, my good fortune exceeds all that imagination had conceived; and love has presented me with the masterpiece of nature. When I had provided myself with jewels and suitable apparel, I left my friend the Alcaide, and hiring post horses hastened to the Governor's palace; or rather the temple of the sun, by whose glorious rays all other splendor was thrown into shade. There I beheld heaven reduced to one sphere, spring to a single flower, the zephyr to a breath, the riches of Aurora to a pearl, and the sun to one glorious

beam: for, in Lisarda, these miracles of nature are concentrated; and I am most fortunate in being the possessor of beauty and merit so incomparable.

Don C. And I am most unfortunate; for I am involved in an intrigue in despite of myself, which seems only to promise vexations. As you justly observed, Don Juan, my misfortunes will be an antidote to your glory. Suppose yourself questioned as a casuist, be the subject love, and answer accordingly. Picture to yourself an alabaster forehead, eyes that are living suns, cheeks that shame the carnation! I have beheld Flora, Queen of May, rivalled in all her fragrant charms. But ask me not who this angel is, for of that I am ignorant myself. I can only tell you that she invites me, by this note, to visit her to-night, if I can elude the vigilance of my guards. I promised to go, rashly depending on your influence with the Alcaide.

Don J. Do not torment yourself with useless fears, Don Cesar: I have no doubt of his compliance. Camacho, tell the Alcaide I want to speak with him. (*Exit* Camacho) He is my intimate friend, and will readily suffer you to quit the fortress, in my company.

Don C. Ask him to let me accompany you, when Night has spread her raven wing.

SCENE XIV.—*Enter* Alcaide *and* Camacho.

Alc. What are your commands, Don Juan.

Don J. You see I am once more your guest; for where Don Cesar is I must be.

Alc. The obligations I owe you are sufficient to command my services.

Don J. Suffer my friend this night to go with me, if I deserve this act of friendship.

Alc. Reason and law would argue against compliance, but I cannot refuse you: only give me your word that your friend shall return before morning.

Don C. Ere the rosy dawn dispels the shades of night, I shall again be your prisoner.

Alc. Till then, may you prosper! [*Exit* Alcaide.

SCENE XV.

Don J. Now, my friend, I'll attend you: wherever you lead, my sword and arm are at your service.

Don C. You cannot with propriety stay so long from the Governor, and your bride. Pray return to the palace.

Don J. It is not just that I should lead you into danger, and there leave you.

Don C. I entreat!

Don J. I will not be refused.

Don C. (*aside*) How vexatious! To carry him to the governor's house, and to expose the friend to whose generosity I am so much indebted, would be cowardly and base.

Don J. Why do you hesitate?

Don C. You think me ungrateful, for concealing my foolish intrigue from you. Thank Heaven, the friendship which subsisted between Pilades and Orestes, or Euryalus and Nisus, has not been unexampled: in you I have a perfect friend; do not think I am insensible to your zeal, but forgive me if I request you to leave me. I am ignorant who the lady is, and I was required to be alone.

Don J. It were in vain to combat such obstinacy; farewell. (*aside*) Ill timed mystery! Impertinent love! [*Exit.*

SCENE XVI.

Don C. Camacho!

Cam. Signor?

Don C. Give me my pocket pistol.

Cam. Here it is, Signor: but is it properly charged? You must not go ill provided.

Don C. It is as it ought to be.

Cam. Am I to remain here?

Don C. Yes. [*Exit.*

Cam. Your worships will bear witness that here I am*.

SCENE XVII.—*Changes to the Governor's House.*

Enter LISARDA *and* NISA *with a Light.*

Lis. Nisa.

Nisa. Signora?

Lis. Is my father retired to his chamber?

Nisa. He is.

Lis. And Don Juan?

Nisa. Yes, Signora.

Lis. Where is Laura?

Nisa. In her room, weeping as usual. Night and day, she mourns her cruel destiny.

Lis. Her tears, I fear, are the confirmation of my misfortune. Where is Celia?

Nisa. She is waiting at the garden gate, for the Cavalier.

Lis. When he comes, treat me without ceremony, and dissemble my real quality; because he is to suppose me the lady whom my father took prisoner, and in whose name I have made this appointment.

Nisa. I hear gentle footsteps.

Lis. It is he, no doubt.

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* This is addressed to the audience.

SCENE XVIII.—*Enter* CELIA *followed by* DON CESAR.

Don C. Gloom and the silence of night are favorable to love.

Cel. Tread softly, for the Lady Lisarda is not yet in bed, and the Governor sleeps hard by.

Don C. Cupid, lend me thy wings!

Lis. You are welcome, Signor.

Don C. In those fair eyes I view the light of heaven.

Lis. Celia, watch at the door, which leads to your master's chamber: do you, friend Nisa, take care that your lady does not surprise us.

Nisa. I tremble.

Lis. Why so?

Nisa. Because my lady is so nigh.

Lis. Keep on the watch, and fear nothing.

Nisa. I have cause enough to fear, for my lady is a dragon of virtue: if she knew such interviews were carried on in her house, her fury would exceed all bounds.

Don C. How anxious I was, Signora, to find an opportunity of speaking with you! I am in a labyrinth of doubt, and am at a loss to account for your imprisonment.

Lis. Nay, that is easily done. I was mistaken for a lady, whom it seems you have carried off, and in search of whom the Governor came.

Don C. I carried off a lady! You are jesting.

Lis. I am serious.

Don C. This is an ingenious artifice, to evade satisfying my suspicions. Am I so contemptible that I cannot excite jealousy? Do you think that, if a lady had been concealed with me, I should have been so regardless of her feelings as to have seen and conversed with you? Were not your terror, and the desire you showed that I should protect you, sufficient proof you were afraid of being discovered? If the Governor had been mistaken in the person, you would now be free. I am persuaded some slighted lover has taken this unmanly revenge on you.

Lis. Do you think that a lover of mine could be guilty of so contemptible an action? Am I so very insignificant? You may be assured, I am a woman of rank; and, being such, the adventure is not at all improbable.

Don C. I believe you, Signora; but I wish to hear more.

Lis. Sit down.

[*As they are going to sit, the pistol of* Don Cesar *goes off.*

Don C. Heaven defend us!

Lis. What will become of me?

Cel. I am half dead!
Nisa. Unfortunate accident!
Gov. (*within*) What is that? Who goes there?
Lis. Answer! Wretched me!
Nisa. I cannot speak!
Cel. I am breathless!
Don C. Who can provide against unforeseen accidents?
Cel. I hear my lord in his chamber; he is certainly rising.
Lis. I believe my end is nigh.
Don C. What is to be done?
Lis. You must jump through the window into the court, which leads to the vestibule, where you may escape by the door. I am too adventurous! The victim of my own imprudence! I give you my word, you shall know who I am, and the destiny of her in whom you are deceived, and whom you love.
Don C. My life is at your devotion. (*jumps through the window.*)

SCENE XIX.

Enter the GOVERNOR *in his Shirt and Doublet, with a Sword and Buckler*.*

Gov. Who went out?
Lis. Nobody, Signor. (*aside*) Wretched me!
Gov. What ails you? Why are you thus disturbed?
Lis. The pistol that went off frightened me.
[*A noise within.*
Gov. What is that?
Lis. I don't know. How I tremble!
Gov. Give me the light; I will search the house, though, if my honor be lost, I cannot hope to recover it. [*Exit.*

[*Scene changes to the Vestibule of the Palace: total darkness.*

Don C. (*groping*) I am in a pretty dilemma: in seeking the door, I have got I know not whither, and am quite bewildered. Why did I come here? Gracious Heaven! How shall I satisfy my suspicions? How extricate myself from difficulties? All is dark! What shall I do? I cannot find the door, yet this is certainly the vestibule, for here is the porter's chair, which fortunately is empty. I will conceal myself behind it, and trust to chance for my deliverance.

[Don Cesar *conceals himself behind a porter's chair: and the* Governor *enters on one side, with a light and his sword drawn:* Don Juan *on the other, with his naked sword.*

* The reader must remember that Calderon wrote at the beginning of the 17th century.

Gov. The noise proceeded from this place. Who goes there?

Don J. Hearing your voice, my lord, I left my chamber.

Gov. (*aside*) To increase my perplexity.

Don J. What means all this noise?

Gov. Nothing! Nothing! (*aside*) My honor forces me to dissemble. (*aloud*) I thought I heard a noise near my apartment, and I rose and searched the house, but found nobody, except my daughter, who had been disturbed by my rising. It was no doubt imaginary.

Don J. You were not deceived, my lord, in thinking somebody was in the house; for I heard a noise like jumping out of a window.

Gov. (*aside*) It is in vain to endeavour to conceal my dishonor. (*aloud*) I have searched the house, and am satisfied: if you are not, take the light and search further.

Don J. (*taking the candle*) Look to the door, my lord, that no one may escape. I will search the vestibule.

Gov. There is nobody thus far.

Don J. But here is a porter's chair; a man may easily conceal himself behind it.

Gov. Examine.

[Don Juan *looks behind the chair and perceives* Don Cesar, *who makes signs to him not to betray him.*

Don J. (*aside*) Merciful God! What is it I see?

Gov. Have you discovered any one?

Don J. No, my lord. (*aside*) Would to Heaven I had not!

Gov. I have searched every other place.

Don J. It is evident—my lord—that—that I was mistaken. The wind might cause the clapping of a door, or—— You had better retire, Signor.

Gov. Return to your chamber, Don Juan, in peace; for, be assured, nobody was in the house.

Don J. Good night, my lord; I, as well as you, have been deceived. [*Exit* Governor.

SCENE XX.

Don J. We mutually seek by evasion to hide our dishonor, and conceal our misfortunes. Great God! How shall I act? Cesar concealed here! Cesar steal into this house at the very moment when I would have protected him with my life? Am I the author of my own dishonor! He might well say he could not tell me the lady's name, since, oh God! it was Lisarda. My friendship and confidence are betrayed, no less than my honor; and each, individually, calls for revenge. I could easily kill him, but how could I then fulfil my word, and bring him back to prison? Have I not promised to defend his life?

And shall I take that life? Heavenly Powers! What am I to do? Must one arm protect, the other kill? Yet die he must? When honor is in question, all other considerations must vanish. Don Cesar!

Don C. (*advancing from behind the chair, and kneeling to* Don Juan) Behold me at your feet.

Don J. Follow me, Don Cesar, and leave vain apologies.

Don C. What is your intention?

Don J. To be revenged on a traitor.

Don C. Your honor and your love, Don Juan, are not injured. I am not a coward, but I would not have you commit an action of which you would afterward repent, without having the power to remedy the mischief.

Don J. How?

Don C. Listen to me, and your doubts shall be satisfactorily answered.

Don J. Is it possible?

Don C. It is.

Don J. Would to Heaven it were!

Don C. First, hear me; then, if you still doubt, seek revenge.

Don J. What excuse can justify your violation of honor, confidence, and friendship? Honor, in breaking into this house; friendship, in seducing the affections of my mistress; and confidence, in making me the accomplice of my infamy? Have I not reason to complain, when my friend is false, treacherous, and dishonorable?

Don C. I may, perhaps, have slightly sinned against confidence and friendship: but the honor of my friend is a sacred altar, at which I would, if necessary, sacrifice my life. I came here to visit a lady, who is a prisoner, and who was taken with me: this is a sufficient reason for me to pay her the attention of a gentleman, and a courtier. You must not be offended at my concealing her abode from you, since it was out of delicacy and respect to your mistress, under whose roof she lives. If you think I have dishonored a family, to which you are so highly indebted, my life is at your service, and I shall die the victim of your unjust suspicions. This honest confession ought to satisfy your honor, banish your suspicions, and restore me to your confidence: since the only wrong you suffer is in doubting my honor, my friendship, and my sincerity.

Don J. These excuses seem good, but they are insufficient: give me till to-morrow, I then will answer you.

Don C. With all my heart. I will return to prison.

Don J. Expect me there.

Don C. Adieu, till to-morrow.

Don J. Adieu. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

The Vestibule in the Governor's Palace. DON JUAN.

Don Juan.

EVER since the rosy dawn first awoke the god of day, my anxious fears have chained me to this spot. I will know my fate. The fair prisoner shall receive neither letter nor message, till I have spoken with her. By taking her unprepared, I shall either be confirmed in my misery, or relieved from the load which oppresses me. Oh, I would give my life to find myself mistaken! If only to imagine my suspicions are just wounds like the arrow of death, how shall I support the reality? I have accused my friend! My misfortune is unequalled, since the remedy will kill no less than the disease. Yonder is Celia—Celia?

SCENE II.—*Enter* CELIA.

Cel. What risen already, Signor?

Don J. Is your lady awake?

Cel. She is getting up.

Don J. Then Aurora a second time shall hail adoring mortals.

Cel. I am now going to my lady; have you any message, Signor?

Don J. Tell her, I am wafting my sighs to her window.

[*Exit* Celia.

SCENE III.

Don J. Oh, what torments the jealous suffer! This strange lady is late this morning: I will however wait; for, as the proverb says, bad news travels post, while the good walks on crutches. This tardiness may be a lucky omen. Oh, how I shall repent my rashness, if my suspicions prove false!

SCENE IV.—*Enter* GOVERNOR.

Gov. Don Juan?

Don J. My lord!

Gov. So early a riser? I fancy the same wish mutually brought us here.

Don J. Very likely.

Gov. You seem to seek me; and I came to find you.

Don J. What is your pleasure, my lord?

Gov. That you may know how highly I esteem you, I will no longer defer your happiness. I well know that love is impatient of delay. This night you shall be the fortunate husband of Lisarda.

Don J. (*aside*) New fears assail me!

Gov. (*aside*) His hesitation confirms my suspicions.

Don J. My lord, since it was your intention to have deferred this favor for a few days, pray do not regard me; I can wait.

Gov. I only waited to make the necessary preparations, which are now finished.

Don J. (*aside*) Cruel perplexity!

Gov. (*aside*) It wears a gloomy aspect. I too plainly perceive that Don Juan, as well as myself, discovered the infamy of last night—If you refuse your consent to-day, Don Juan, to-morrow it will be my turn. [*Exit.*

SCENE V.

Don J. What a cruel dilemma! But here comes the lady I seek. Oh, jealousy, death alone can set thee at defiance!

SCENE VI.—*Enter* FLORIDA.

Flor. You are here early, Signor.

Don J. Yes, and solely to speak with you, Signora.

Flor. Pray let me hear.

Don J. Will you trust to my honor, and truly answer the questions I may ask?

Flor. I will.

Don J. You safely may, for you are deeply interested in them. Speak freely: do you know Don Cesar Ursino?

Flor. Yes, Signor. Would to Heaven I never had known him! He is the cause of my being here; for his sake, I have endured woes unspeakable; and have sacrificed my reputation to the love I bear him.

Don J. (*aside*) This is a favorable beginning—Did you meet him by night?

Flor. Often have I met him at the risk of my life.

Don J. (*aside*) Take courage my heart! (*aloud*) Tell me, without reserve, did you meet him in the garden?

Flor. Spare me, Signor! A garden was the scene of my disgrace! and its fragrant flowers bore silent testimony of my cruel fortune.

Don J. This is sufficient! You have given me new life. (*aside*) Oh, honorable friend, pardon my unjust suspicions! I am undeceived—Adieu, Signora: accept my grateful acknowledgments, and do not mention what has passed between us to Lisarda.

Flor. Stay, Signor—Whither in such haste?

Don J. Since my doubts are satisfied, it is but just that I should fly to my friend Don Cesar, who expects me in his prison: I wish to hear no more—Adieu! [*Exit.*

SCENE VII.

Flor. Fly to Don Cesar? What does he mean? His inquiries, his knowledge of my lover's imprisonment, and his eagerness to see him, fill me with new doubts. Yet, most probably, he questioned me that he might bring my lover intelligence of my abode. He plainly gave me to understand, by telling me he was going to see him, that he had been desired by Don Cesar to inform me of his imprisonment—Shall I not fly to console him?

SCENE VIII.—*Enter* LISARDA *and* CELIA. FLORIDA *going.*

Lis. Why do you hurry away?

Flor. Not being ignorant, little as my deserts are, that my felicity will be yours, I must inform you my lover is a prisoner here. I have just now received the intelligence, and he has been told that I am in your house. Oh, how fortunate was my coming hither! He cannot accuse me of having been a despised vagrant, in his absence! I am wild with joy! To-day, I shall see my beloved Cesar! [*Exit.*

SCENE IX.

Lis. Vexation on vexation!

Cel. What vexation?

Lis. Are you blind to the tender fear which lurks in every pang, and which shrinks from conviction as from death? Am I not most wretched? Is not the malice of fortune unconquerable?

Cel. In what?

Lis. Do I not too plainly discover that the Cavalier, whom, alas, I find I love, is betrothed to this lady, whom I protect. Yes, events all rush on "from bad to worse*!"

Cel. Supposing there only to be one duellist in the world, Signora, your fears would be reasonable; but not when three persons out of four† commit the same fault. Banish these gloomy illusions! If Jealousy be an astrologer, and draws this black horoscope, for that very reason you ought not to believe a syllable of it.

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* Lisarda has a very long speech, with poetical quotations, repeating the incidents already known. Calderon appears to have doubted either of the memory or the understanding of his audience.

† This proves the dangerous excess of duelling, at that time, in Spain.

SCENE X.—*Enter* CAMACHO.

Cam. (*to himself*) I am embarked in this blessed adventure, with the risk of being turned neck and shoulders out of doors. However, I will break the enchantment!

Cel. Here is the servant of Signor Fabio.

Lis. (*to* Celia) His servant! It was he, no doubt, who informed Laura that his master was in prison. I will know the truth. He has never seen my face; we must dissemble.

Cel. (*to* Camacho) What brings you here, friend, with so little ceremony?

Cam. My legs brought me; and, if you, ladies, are offended, they shall carry me back again to the same time and tune. I cannot brag much of my agility in dancing, for my right foot cannot beat measure with my left; but they can beat a quick retreat.

Lis. Say, good soldier, who are you?

Cam. I would tell you, if I could; but verily it is more than I know myself, for I belong to a master, God mend him, who keeps me in a continual state of jeopardy. He, like a knight possessed, is galloping through the labyrinth of love in search of a sun in eclipse; or, to speak plainer, of a lady enveloped, from the sole of her foot to the crown of her head, in a veil. Oh, rare invention; the most convenient in the world! If either of you are a prisoner, say so for love of God; for I, a stranger here, am come solely to find such a lady, and if I return unsuccessful, I may expect a broken head. Suffer me then to pay my most sovereign homage to her beauty, and have the goodness to point her out.

Cel. (*to* Lisarda) Did not I tell you, Signora, that the astrologer lied?

Lis. He may come to seek the lady who is a prisoner, unknown to herself.

Cel. How skilful the imagination is in tormenting itself!

Lis. (*aside*) While jealousy dissembles, love speaks the truth. (*to* Camacho) Is your master so partial to this lady?

Cam. Yes, Signora.

Lis. Is it for her beauty, or her wit?

Cam. Oh, for both.

Lis. Does he praise her much?

Cam. Oh, he praises her inordinately.

Lis. He loves her then?

Cam. Oh, no; there is a first love to be effaced. My master only amuses himself; because, you know, one face obliterates another in painting.

Lis. Obliterates! Painting! What do you mean?

Cam. That is more than I know. But I think you are the lady that is to obliterate the other: pray tell me if I guess right?

Lis. (*aside*) I shall expire!—No, insolent audacious intruder, I am not. I am the Governor's daughter, and will not suffer such intrigues to be carried on before my face. The woman you seek is under my protection, for this house is the sanctuary of honor. Dare again to enter these doors, and four lackeys shall toss you out of the window.

Cam. Four! Weigh me, and you will find that three are sufficient. Three! Nay, two will execute the task. Why do I say two? One is quite enough. One! A half, a quarter, an arm, a hand, nay, a finger would master me: so, before they make their appearance, I shall beat a march—Adieu, Signora! [*Exit.*

SCENE XI.

Lis. My ill fortune pursues me in every trifle.

Cel. You listen too much to your fears.

Lis. I will end this cruel suspense. I will let him know that, if he can bribe his guards, I will elude the vigilance of mine; and that I will meet him wherever he likes.

Cel. Good!

Lis. Should he name a place of rendezvous, I will take this lady with me; and, if he prove to be her Cavalier (preserve me, Love, from so cruel a disappointment) I will renounce my hopes: but, if I am fortunately mistaken, my love shall conquer all difficulties.

Cel. But, supposing him to be a man of strict honor, your consenting to meet him, on such terms, will give him an ill opinion of you.

Lis. Never fear. I shall find a remedy for all inconveniencies.

SCENE XII.—*Enter* FLORIDA, *veiled.*

Lis. Where are you going, Laura?

Flor. With your permission, lady, to a prison, which contains my soul!

Lis. (*aside*) Wretched me! Say rather going to take my life! Shall I suffer her to leave me distracted with suspense?—Is my house so little worthy of respect, Signora, that you take your veil and go when and where you please?

Flor. My fortunes are now so low it little matters, since they have brought me from Naples to this place, that I should go from hence to a prison.

Lis. Have you no recollection of the interest we have shown for your honor? What will my father say, should he find you gone?

Flor. I will return before he comes; it is not very late.

Lis. You must accompany me on a visit, this evening.

Flor. Can you expect that I shall delay seeing my betrothed husband?

Lis. I want you.

Flor. I will return instantly: I only wish to see him.

Lis. But I wish you to stay.

Flor. I shall then be at your service.

Lis. It is in vain to argue; you cannot go.

Flor. Indeed, Signora, I must.

SCENE XIII.—*Enter* GOVERNOR.

Gov. How? Wrangling!

Lis. The lady is angry, because I wish her well. She would fain have gone out and not asked your permission.

Gov. Was that all?

Flor. I own, my lord, I should have consulted you; but surely it is no crime to visit a man whom I adore, to whom I am betrothed, and who is in a prison!

Gov. Very true; but you are detained a prisoner, that you may not see him.

Flor. A prisoner, my lord!

Gov. Are you so forgetful? Do not you remember the garden?

Flor. Oh, yes! Too well!

Gov. Came you not a prisoner from thence?

Lis. (*aside*) The mistake will be discovered.

Flor. A prisoner? No, my lord.

Gov. Did not I find you there?

Flor. I came here voluntarily.

Gov. Did I not send you hither under an escort?

Flor. (*to* Lisarda) For the love of God, Signora, explain this.

Lis. Did I not find you concealed in my house? How should I have known your story, but from yourself.

Flor. What strange misunderstanding is this?

Gov. You still persist in denying it? I shall leave you together: for Heaven's sake, recollect yourself, lady! You will drive me mad! [*Exit* Governor.

SCENE XIV.

Flor. I sent here a prisoner!

Lis. No.

Flor. Then, why did you so cruelly mortify me?

Lis. Pardon me, Laura*; I acted from necessity. Come with me this evening; you shall then know all, and your anxiety shall cease.

Flor. Patience, I follow thy steps! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE XV.—*Changes to the Fortress:* DON JUAN, DON CESAR.

Don J. I am ashamed of having doubted your friendship! But Love, whom the poets describe as blind, and to whom the

* The name Florida assumes to Lisarda.

gods have allotted Jealousy as a guide, must plead my excuse. Nor think it an idle invention that Love is the slave of Jealousy, and must implicitly follow her dictates. My suspicions are now removed, my doubts cleared, and I am perfectly satisfied: if you are not, cut my throat.

Don C. Though I might justly complain, dear Juan, of your incredulity, I will be silent. I love you too well not to overlook the first cause you ever gave me of dissatisfaction. I confess that appearances were against me, and that your generosity in sparing my life was great; but I must likewise own that I would not admit the apology of any man, but yourself, who had doubted my honor. How were you undeceived?

Don J. It pains me to recollect that I wronged you: let us consign this disagreeable affair to oblivion. My eyes and lips will bear witness that your mistress is handsome.

Don C. Rather say beautiful.

Don J. But Lisarda is incomparably more lovely. Her beauty is a sun, to which all beauties are satellites! A boundless ocean, in which the noblest rivers are lost!

Don C. Her beauty may be less; but, in wit and understanding, my prisoner cannot be inferior. Suffer me to read you a billet I have just received; for, since Love has dropped the mask, secrecy would be absurd.

Don J. It will give me pleasure.

Don C. You will find I have not exaggerated her merit.

SCENE XVI.—*Enter* CAMACHO.

Cam. Thank Heaven, I have escaped! I can scarcely move one foot before the other.

Don J. What is the matter?

Don C. Why are you so frightened?

Cam. Oh, I have windows, balconies, and lackeys at my heels! (*to* Don Cesar) I went, Signor, to catch a glimpse at your lady prisoner, to see if she were as handsome and as witty as you said; but I stumbled upon a she-dragon, who called herself Lisarda, and who fell into a desperate fury, on hearing the business I came about, and threatened to have me tossed out of the window, if ever I set foot in her doors again.

Don J. I believe you. Lisarda is no less prudent than she is beautiful. But let us hear the billet, Don Cesar, that we may admire the wit of the fair writer.

Don C. (*reads aloud*) "If you can bribe your guards, as I have bribed mine, I will see you this evening; but on three conditions. First, that you send a sedan chair to the door of the great church; secondly, that you find a place where we may safely converse; and, thirdly, that you leave your pistols at home."

Don J. The style is courteous and tierce; but the attempt appears to me a rash one.

Cam. Signors, listen to a tale which I shall have the honor to recount. A country boor, loaded with a cord, a pole, a goat, a fowl, an onion, and a saucepan, came trudging from market: a strapping lass, on the same road, called out and desired he would stop to speak with her. "Wounds!" exclaimed the clown, "don't you see I'm loaded? Would you have me lose my purchases?"—"You are a ninny," said she: "cannot you stick the pole in the ground, tie your goat to it by the leg with the cord, cover your fowl with your saucepan, and put the onion in your mouth?" When a woman is bent on doing a thing, no human obstacle can prevent her.

Don J. (*to* Cesar) What is your plan?

Don C. If you could again prevail on the Alcaide to let me out, as the day is declining, I would immediately seek a lodging and meet the lady.

Cam. Your lordship is laden as heavily as the countryman; nay more so.

Don J. I will answer for the permission of the Alcaide, and I can offer you my apartments with safety; for that side of the palace has a private door, which leads into a back street. You can go there, in a coach, and receive your mistress.

Cam. The thought is excellent! You certainly, Signor, have taken a lesson of the country lass.

Don J. Go, Camacho; hire a chair. Here is the key of my apartments; put every thing in order, and then fetch the lady. Make haste.

Cam. So! I am like a cook, who prepares the most dainty dishes, without being permitted to taste one of them! I must be content with looking on and admiring! [*Exit* Camacho.

SCENE XVII.

Don C. How can I acknowledge your kindness?

Don J. Let it atone for my injustice, yesterday.

Don C. Will you indeed procure my freedom, and leave me your apartments for to-night?

Don J. It will be better that you should go now, than wait till night. But here comes the Governor.

Don C. His coming hither is strange!

SCENE XVIII.—*Enter* GOVERNOR.

Gov. You here, Don Juan!

Don J. I too am a prisoner, my lord.

Gov. A prisoner!

Don J. Yes; since my friend is in prison.

Gov. You speak well: but, if this argument holds good, we are all prisoners; for we are all the friends of Don Cesar.

Don C. Language can feebly express how deeply I feel your kindness! May your days be long, and happy!

Gov. Don Juan, do me the honor to leave me with your friend: we have much to say to each other.

Don J. I obey your commands.

Don C. (*aside*) Vexatious interruption! What an opportunity have I lost! I shall never be so fortunate again. (*whispers* Don Juan) You see my situation, Don Juan; if the lady should be arrived at your apartments, since cruel fortune will not allow me to keep my appointment, see her yourself (she will, no doubt, be disguised as before) and tell her I am distracted that I am prevented from meeting her: but do not, for your life, let her perceive that you know her.

Don J. You may depend on me.

Don C. Once more, remember, she must not in the least suspect that you know her.

Don J. She shall not. [*Exit.*

SCENE XIX.

Gov. Let us be seated, Don Cesar. (*they sit.*)

Don C. I am entirely at your devotion.

Gov. First, it is necessary to inform you that Don Alonzo Colona is the friend of my youth; the just regard I have for his honor, and happiness, urges me to interest myself in your concerns. Do not consider me as a stern judge: it is true, I wish to serve my friend; but with moderation and wisdom. Violence can do no good; therefore, it will be virtue to forgive the past, and to settle the affair amicably. I have obtained your pardon, which is confirmed in this letter, on condition that you make an honorable reparation to the young lady. In short, if you consent to marry his daughter and return home, Don Alonzo will receive you with open arms.

Don C. My lord, you are noble, and bind me your eternal debtor. It was the ungovernable rage of jealousy which impelled me to commit the violence of which Don Alonzo justly complains. I now am convinced that my jealousy was unfounded, and I am ready to marry the lovely Florida, whenever you please.

Gov. You shall be married this night.

Don C. But can the marriage take place so soon?

Gov. Why not? You are here, and the lady you know is at my house.

Don C. Of that I was ignorant.

Gov. Was she not in your company when I made you my prisoner?

Don C. What mistake is this? My lord, if you imagined

the lady whom you took with me was my charming Florida, you were mistaken.

Gov. But how could her father's servant, who likewise saw and knew her, be mistaken?

Don C. Have you not any other lady a prisoner in your house?

Gov. No. Is not the lady I found with you Donna Florida?

Don C. My lord, once more I assure you, it is not her.

Gov. I shall lose all patience! Did she not herself, with the most touching confusion, acknowledge her love, and the imprudence she had committed?

Don C. This acknowledgment may be applicable to any other lady.

Gov. Granted. But if her domestic followed, and recognized her, what can you further allege?

Don C. That he did not speak the truth.

Gov. You will drive me mad!

Don C. Take me to the lady, and, if she affirm to my face that she is the daughter of Don Alonzo, I will marry her instantly.

Gov. You speak fairly. Come.

Don. C. Deliver me, oh Heavens, from this labyrinth of doubt!

Gov. Holy Virgin, unravel this strange entanglement!

Don C. (*to* Governor) It is her, you say, whom you found in the garden?

Gov. Yes.

Don C. Then, on my honor, it is not Florida.

Gov. The affair is more perplexed than ever!

[*Exeunt* Governor *and* Don Cesar.

SCENE XX.

Changes to the Apartments of Don Juan, *in the Governor's Palace.* Lisarda *and* Florida, *concealed in their Veils, followed by* Camacho.

Cam. This is the house, ladies. I took a long circuit to avoid being followed; (*aside*) and that you might not know where you were.

Lis. We have been so long veiled in the dark, that I have not the least idea where we are.

Cam. My orders were to bring you here, and then to make the outside door fast. Remain where you are! These are the apartments of a young gentleman; you will find enough to amuse you. Adieu, ladies. [*Exit* Camacho.

SCENE XXI.

Flor. (*aside*) I have been silent all the way, that Camacho might not discover me. Don Cesar must certainly be in this city. But why is Lisarda here in disguise? Is he unfaithful? Must I witness his infidelity? Heavens grant this adventure may end well!

Lis. We may now breathe a little more freely, Laura; for nobody is here to see us. (*unveiling, and recognizing the place*) Great God!

Flor. Why do you look so frightened, Signora?

Lis. Do not ask me, Laura: I am dead!

Flor. What is the matter?

Lis. Matter enough, alas! I brought you with me to meet a gentleman, for reasons which you shall hereafter be told, and thought we were in a strange house; instead of which, I find myself at home. These apartments are those of Don Juan: *you* have not seen them before, but I know them too well. The door opens into another street; and I, coming thus without either guide, caution, or light, like a bewildered sparrow, fell into the net. My ruin, alas, is certain! And who can I blame, but myself? Let me examine whether it be reality, or an illusion! Who could have thought that circumstances, on which life and death depend, could so deceive me! These chairs, this writing desk, that looking glass, that tapestry, are the same! There is nothing to hope! I am in my own house. Heavens! how could this happen? But I will not weakly despair; if I have so often frustrated the malice of fortune, why should I now fall her victim? The door here, in the wainscot, communicates with my apartments: if any person were within, it might be opened. If we could but escape, we might easily find an excuse to satisfy the person who expects us. But supposing that out of our power, the mischief would be trifling. Let us listen at the key-hole.

Flor. Yonder is Celia, working at your chamber window, which looks into the garden.

Lis. Let us call. (*calls*) Celia! You do not know who calls, because you cannot see us. Come to the wainscot door.

Celia. (*at the door*) Who is there? Who wants me?

Lis. It is I, Celia. Open this door, and you shall know all.

Cel. My lord left the key on his writing desk, this morning: I'll run and fetch it.

Lis. Oh that your speed could equal my impatience!

Flor. We have no chance of escaping.

Lis. How so?

Flor. I hear the door, and a man's step.

Lis. It must be Don Juan. What shall I do? Good Angels protect me! I must have recourse to art. Throw this

veil over you, Laura, and conceal your face while he unlocks the door.

SCENE XXII.—*Enter* DON JUAN.

Don J. The lady is not in the anti-chamber. I must search this. (*seeing* Lisarda) *You* here, Signora! What does this mean?

Lis. Why it means, Signor Don Juan, that I, knowing a lady was waiting for you, am courteous enough to keep her company. Fearing she should find the time hang heavy on her hands, I left my room, and came through the little door in the wainscot to show her the way out. You are really a courtly gentleman, a faithful lover, and a very honorable bridegroom!

Don J. Signora!

Lis. Do not aggravate your guilt, by making false excuses.

Don J. Oh, no!

Lis. You are a discourteous cavalier! a faithless and ungrateful lover!

Don J. Do you know this lady?

Lis. Would you have me, like yourself, give offence to those who have not offended me?

Don J. Only listen, and you shall be convinced.

Lis. My heart is not so deeply interested in the affair, Don Juan, as to make any explanation necessary. It is not jealousy I feel, but a proper feeling of the offence you commit against decorum, and your contempt of my person. Is it possible? Bring a lady secretly into my house before my face! Convey her hither in a chair, with a footman at her heels, who is guarding the outward door like a bull-dog, and who may be one of my domestics, to whom you have given this honorable commission! I know all!

Don J. Pray, listen.

Lis. I will hear nothing.

Don J. Be convinced.

Lis. You cannot justify yourself.

Don J. A friend——

Lis. Oh, this will not do. You would have me believe that a friend borrowed your apartment, to receive his mistress: a thing frequently done by young men. The excuse is frivolous.

Don J. Hear me, I conjure you, Signora.

Lis. Those who listen wish to be convinced; I am totally indifferent. Give me the key then——

Don J. You must not leave me, till you know——

Lis. I do not want to know. Let me be gone. (*to* Florida) Go, Signora, and think yourself fortunate that you have met with a person who owes herself too much respect to treat you as you

deserve. (*aside to her*) Pardon, my dear Laura! Cruel necessity is to blame.

Don J. (*aside*) Oh, friendship, how severe are thy laws!—Indeed, Signora, you must not go, till you have heard my justification.

Lis. If I do not wish to hear it, to what purpose is your speaking?

Don J. Oh, lady, you ought to know me better! Do not think so meanly of your lover; and must I implore you to think more highly of yourself?

Lis. You *will* speak? Oh, what a weak defence you make!

SCENE XXIII.—*Enter* CELIA *through the Wainscot Door.*

Cel. (*privately to* Lisarda) Signora?

Lis. What do you want?

Cel. The door is open.

Lis. You were very slow: but no matter.

Cel. What does all this mean?

Lis. (*aside*) Go, softly, and bring some refreshments into my room; this poor lady is in need of them: then see if the outside door is open.

Don J. Why will you refuse to listen to the truth? I hear footsteps! Heavens, it is your father! Let me conjure you to be silent.

Lis. (*aside*) Indeed, I shall be the first to speak. If I can find a good excuse to refuse his hand, why should I not take this opportunity of recovering my freedom?

SCENE XXIV.

Enter GOVERNOR, DON CESAR, *and* CAMACHO.

Gov. What is the matter? Hearing a confusion of voices as I entered the house, I came hither to learn. You here, Lisarda?

Lis. I came hither——

Gov. For what?

Lis. To visit a lady.

Gov. A lady here! Who can it be?

Lis. That lady in a veil, who came to visit Don Juan.

Gov. You have little cause to treat my house with such levity and disrespect, Signor.

Don J. Since you, my lord, think me culpable, my friend must pardon my revealing the truth: for the laws of friendship are not so rigorous as to require a man to lose his honor, which I now am in danger of losing, when I hoped the most enviable felicity. This lady cannot be injured by my confession; for

she is the fair choice of Don Cesar, and the same whom your lordship took a prisoner. He has before seen and conversed with her; and she came this evening to meet him. If aiding my friend be an unpardonable offence, I plead guilty.

Flor. (*aside*) I converse with Cesar! I see him!

Don C. (*aside*) If the lady, who is unveiled, be the same to whom I spoke, who can the other be?

Gov. Unveil, Signora, since you are known. There is no great impropriety in your appointing to meet your bridegroom. I wish beside to convince him that you are Florida; for he affirms the contrary.

Flor. (*unveiling*) Yes, I am Florida, my lord; for no other woman can be so unfortunate.

Don C. Heavens! What do I see!

Gov. Tell me now, Don Cesar, is it Florida?

Don C. Yes, my lord.

Gov. You surely had a plot upon my wits, when you persisted in denying the truth, at the very time you intended to visit your mistress?

Lis. (*aside*) Since Fortune has now done her worst, I am consoled. I have lost my lover, but my honor may yet be preserved. (*aloud*) If you all wish to have the solution of these enigmas, which have given you so much uneasiness, know that I have, from the first, been the confident of the lovely Florida, and wished to monopolize the glory of restoring her to happiness and honor. I quarrelled with Don Juan, to punish him for so lightly weighing the respect due to this house, and his bride.

Flor. Since my honor is recovered, why need I inquire any further? (*to* Cesar) I am yours.

Don C. I thankfully accept the blessing, (*to* Lisarda) if you are content.

Lis. (*to* Cesar) The pleasure of doing good restores me to serenity and joy.

Gov. Since Love has joined one couple, let Reason unite a second. Don Juan, take Lisarda's hand.

Don J. (*to* Lisarda) My faith and heart are yours!

Cam. (*to the audience*) Since our adventures are terminated by a double marriage, I may with propriety deny the proverb, "from bad to worse," and inform you that the comedy is finished.

Don C. (*to the audience*) And you, noble senate, kindly excuse the faults of the author, who throws himself on your mercy. [*Exeunt Omnes.*

THE END.

REMARKS.

This Comedy is an excellent specimen of that species of dramatic composition in which Spain appears most to have delighted, and her authors to have attained the greatest excellence. Instead of keeping the attention alive by character, and humor, or such events as produce a rational pathos, the efforts of the poet were on the continual stretch, to discover how lovers should be brought on the brink of destruction, and delivered by some unforeseen incident, or fortunate stratagem, suggested at the moment. The more entangled these incidents were, the greater the danger they produced, and the more extraordinary the miracle by which it was eluded, the higher was the delight that auditor and author received. The pursuits, which the nation thought proper to dignify by the titles *love* and *honor*, were those by which it was particularly characterized: but, as there was a large mixture of alloy to debase that which was in some respects so noble, the poet had not often the art to purify, and separate the bad from the good. In the preceding comedy, various of the characters, in other respects highly honorable, yield either to direct falsehood, or that evasion, which does not appear conscious of being criminal. Evasion and falsehood cannot, perhaps, be banished from the stage, while the follies and vices of men are there exhibited; but they should appear in their native colours, and lead, as they do in real life, to those consequences by which their authors are always either despised or punished. Rules so rigid, it is true, are much more easily written than observed; but the difficulties will be less, as the taste and morality of spectators improve. In the Spanish, authors did not generally divide their pieces into acts, but *jornadas*, or days, of which there were usually three; and, so little did they regard the unities of time and place, their three days appear to have been taken at such intervals as might suit their story. Neither are the scenes themselves, nor the places to which they change, generally marked in the old Spanish comedies: they are obliged to be divined by the text, as in the present instance,

To the unity of action, however, they often adhere more closely than those rival nations who have superciliously affected to hold them in contempt; for, though two or more love intrigues are involved in the plot, it is from the mistakes of them all that intricacies and difficulties arise, so as to influence each other and form a single fable. The comedy of FROM BAD TO WORSE [*Peor está que estaba*] only requires judicious alterations to ensure success on the stage. Its figurative and often inflated style is but an example of what was supposed to be the true sublime and beautiful, among the poets of Spain.

DRAMATIC BIOGRAPHY.

CALDERON DE LA BARCA*.

TO the edition of this poet's dramatic works, printed at Madrid in 1726, a life of him, by *Don Juan de Vera Tassis y Villarroel*, is prefixed, from which most of the following particulars are taken. Like many or rather most other Spanish works, the style in which this life is written is ridiculously inflated, and bombastic: but, as it appears to have been composed by a contemporary and friend of Calderon de la Barca, the desire to give a sufficiently high degree of praise might increase such a defect. The facts, however, apparently, have been carefully collected, from public records and from the sister of the poet, Dorotea, a nun in the royal convent of Santa Clara, at Toledo.

"Calderon de la Barca was born in 1601, on the day of the holy circumcision, of honorable parents, under whom he began his education. He was afterward sent to the university of Salamanca, where he is said to have studied mathematics, philosophy, geography, chronology, history, sacred and profane, and law, civil and canonical. During his studies he began to discover the perfect poet, and to illustrate the theatres of Spain with his ingenious comedies.

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* A beautifully embellished head (by H. Thompson, R. A.) of this poet will be given, in the next Number.

"At the age of nineteen, he left Salamanca; and at twenty-five he served the king at Milan, and afterward in Flanders; being no less excellent in arms than in letters. We find him continue thus doubly to be employed, particularly in writing pieces for the celebration of royal festivals, for which he received many honors and rewards from his majesty. As a poet, his facility and fecundity were astonishing: he appears to have written a hundred and twenty pieces, each of three jornadas, or acts, equal in length to dramas of five acts; eight or more of one act each; and about a hundred of *Autos Sacramentales*, which are a kind of religious mysteries. All these seem to have appeared in print, as most libraries are in possession of his three act pieces; and there is a catalogue of the others at the beginning of this common edition of his works.

"The *Autos Sacramentales* were annually written, to celebrate religious festivals at the cities of Madrid, Toledo, Seville, and Grenada.

"At the age of fifty-one, he became a churchman; at sixty-three, he was received into the venerable and noble congregation of Saint Peter; at sixty-six, he was elected *Capellan Mayor*, or chief; and he died at the advanced age of eighty-one.

"The living images that he left of his wonderful genius, and the strong pictures which his elegant writings contain of his copious and incomparable understanding, are almost incredible. His mental vigor, in early youth and old age, was equally displayed. At little more than thirteen, he nobly began his career with a piece entitled *El Carro del Cielo;* and concluded, at eighty-one, with *La Gran Comedia*, Hado y Divisa. In this interim (beside a great number of manuscript pieces, as we find from catalogues) he produced two hundred *Loas;* [Prologues] a hundred *Saynetes;* [Interludes] a Book on the Public Entry of the Queen-mother; a long Discourse on Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell, in a poetical stanza of eight lines; a Treatise in defence of the Dignity of Painting; another on Comedy; beside Songs, Sonnets, Romances, and innumerable compositions, which gained the prizes in learned academies,

and was honored by the invariable applause of the best judges. His works are preserved, with veneration, in the library of the college *Mayor de Oviedo* at Salamanca, as among the most select of Spain. Our catholic monarchs acknowledged his *Autos*, as jewels worthy of royal capacity; and sent them, with commentaries, as presents to the Emperor of Germany and King of France. He was the honored and rewarded Cavalier of three monarchs: Philip III. the Pious, Philip IV. the Great, and Charles II. the Beloved; whom God preserve."

Much more might be selected from his Spanish biographer, and from other documents printed at the beginning of each volume of his Comedies; but an abstract only is or can be given here. It may however amuse the critic, the scholar, and the philosopher, to turn to the article Calderon, in *Le Nouveau Dictionnaire Historique**; where he will find a meagre account of this great man, and the following remarks:

"The rules of the dramatic art are violated, in almost all "his works. In his tragedies, we find the dignity, the mean- "ness, and the irregularity, of Shakspeare; traits of genius "no less powerful; humor equally out of place; inflation no "less capricious; and a similar jumble of action and incident. "He knew neither truth, probability, nor nature. His come- "dies were a little better; but, in his tragedies, the most con- "temptible ignorance of history is seen."

Was the contemptible ignorance, here so dogmatically pronounced, due to Calderon, or to the author of this article? The praise given to Calderon by his biographer, Don Juan, may have been too great: yet, when we recollect all the thoughts, all the imagery, all the invention, of a poet so extraordinary, we may doubt if any praise can at all equal the truth. And what will an English reader think, when he sees Calderon and Shakspeare coupled, as examples of the most defective and, speaking generally, the most contemptible of poets? There is scarcely any thing that can fall from the pen of man more degrading than the trash of such loquacious, such

* A French work of biography, in many volumes.

presumptuous, such ignorant critics. Shakspeare had great faults; Calderon might have still greater; but Voltaire, after whose dictates these pretended critics prate, had not sufficiently studied them, so as well to understand either their beauties or their defects: for, if he had, he himself deserves the contempt with which he endeavoured to load their memory. Of such wilful injustice, let us hope, so great a man could not be guilty.

NEW PIECE

FIRST PERFORMED IN MARCH, 1805,

CALLED

OUT OF PLACE.

THOUGH this is the period of the season generally the most productive of new pieces, the attention of the town has been so astonishingly attracted by the performances of Master Betty that, except himself, all novelty is prohibited, because unnecessary, at the theatre where he acts. The pleasure of admiration is paradoxically sympathetic: it spreads from breast to breast, increasing till it becomes rapture, without any individual knowing why or how it began. A man of fashion publicly said, of Master Betty, *he must have been sent from heaven; and he should not be in the least surprised if he were to see him some night ascend from the stage!* The admiration that at present has seized upon the minds of men, with such absolute dominion, is a phenomenon that well deserves the inquiry and development of the philosopher: but it must be at some distant period; for the voice of truth is too feeble to be heard till the wild freaks of insanity shall subside.

One of the most fallacious of principles is that which pretends to found itself upon unanimous consent: unanimous meaning an undoubted majority of opinions. It was that undoubted majority which for so many ages continued to maintain the supremacy of the pope; and that still, in numberless instances, continues to maintain errors, physical, moral, and religious, so as to be destructive both of body and mind, among the people where they are to be found. And who are

the people among whom they are not to be found? The multitude must always prevail. A madman only would pretend to show his skill in swimming by endeavours to stem and turn a roaring torrent. That man has a pitiful ambition, who seeks the honors of martyrdom on a trifling or a contemptible occasion: the grandeur of the cause only can render such honors glorious. A rabbit-woman, a bottle-conjurer, or a Cock-lane ghost: no matter what! Whatever folly is in fashion, reign it must: and, as for disputing, it is not yet decided whether the devil has or has not horns. *It's a Mad World, my Masters*, is the title of an old comedy.

Such reflections will intrude: the times give birth to them; and would do to many more, were they indulged.

The only new piece at present to be noticed is a two act opera, by Mr. Reynolds, entitled Out of Place, or The Lake of Lausanne. Such performances only pretend to afford amusement for an hour, and seldom to instruct or to inform. Many well-meaning moralists inconsiderately laugh at the supposition that the theatre is a place where information may be obtained, not remembering that moral conduct depends upon the consequences of human actions being well understood; and that he who best develops those consequences is the best of moral instructors. To afford innocent amusement, however, is a desirable and happy talent. In writing this piece, little care has been taken to form a plan, and give probability to incidents, or consistency to character. At what era the action is supposed to have happened it is impossible to discover: the costume is that of two or three centuries past; the praises of William Tell are sung, who is well known to have been the deliverer of his country; yet a Governor, who is one of the principal characters in the piece, capriciously and at pleasure gives his orders to imprison, put to death, or release, whoever he pleases. Such violent authority could only have existed since the French revolution. Pleasantry, and to afford an opportunity for favorite singers to be heard, were what Mr. Reynolds had in view, and these he has effected. Mr. Fawcett does great justice to the whimsical effrontery of the servant out of place; and the person who for the first time goes to this

performance must be very cynical, if he does not sometimes laugh. He to whom the singing likewise does not afford pleasure must be difficult to please.

THE ART OF ACTING.

IN the last number of this work, room was wanting to continue the subject on the Art of Acting; and in the present number the third chapter of that continuation will be again omitted, not because so valuable a subject is thought to be uninteresting to theatrical inquiry, or to the pleasure and benefit of society; far, far the reverse; but to make room for the following long extract, in which that art is incidentally treated of by example; and in which M. Marmontel, the author of it, does but describe a vicious mode of acting, common perhaps to all nations, for it is every where a subject of complaint. This extract was sent me by a friend, at Paris, where the Memoirs of Marmontel (a posthumous work, by that author, lately published) are at present read with avidity.

'I had long been in the habit of disputing with Mademoiselle Clairon, concerning the manner of declaiming tragic verses. I blamed her for too much violence and impetuosity, too little suppleness and variety in her performance, and especially for her loud and continued exertions, which were rather a-kin to rant than to sensibility. This I modestly endeavoured to make her understand. "You have," said I, "all the means of excelling in your art; and, great as you are, it would be easy for you still to rise above yourself, by managing more carefully the powers of which you are so prodigal. You tell me of your uncommon success, and of the advantages I [as an author] have gained by them: you oppose me by the opinion of the town, the suffrages of your friends, nay by the authority of M. de Voltaire, who himself recites his verses with emphasis, and who pretends that tragic verses require, in declamation, the same pomp as in the style. I can only answer, I have an irresistible feeling, which convinces me that declamation, like style, may be noble, majes-

tic, and tragic, with simplicity; and that expression, profoundly to penetrate, requires gradations, shades, and those unforeseen and sudden traits, of which it cannot admit, while it is forced and violent." To this she used to reply, sometimes with impatience, that I should never let her rest, till she had assumed a familiar and comic tone in tragedy. "Ah! no, Mademoiselle," said I, "that you will never have; nature has forbidden it; you even have it not, while you are speaking to me; the sound of your voice, the air of your countenance, your pronunciation, your gestures, and your attitudes, are all naturally noble. Dare only to confide in this charming native talent, and I dare warrant you will be the more tragic."

'Other counsels than mine prevailed, and, tired of being importunate without utility, I had yielded, when I saw the actress suddenly and voluntarily come over to my opinion. She was to play *Roxane*, at the little theatre at Versailles. Visiting her there at her toilette, for the first time, I found her dressed in the habit of a sultana, without a hoop, her arms half naked, and in the true oriental costume. I congratulated her. "You will presently be delighted with me," said she. "I have just been on a journey to Bourdeaux; I found there but a very small theatre, to which I was obliged to accommodate myself. The thought struck me of reducing my action to it, and of making trial of that simple declamation you have so often required of me, and it had the greatest imaginable success. I am about to try it again here, on this little theatre. Go and hear me. If it succeed as well, farewel to my old declamation."

'The event surpassed her expectations and mine. It was no longer the actress, it was Roxana herself, whom the audience saw and heard. The astonishment, the illusion, the enchantment, were extreme. All inquired, where are we? They had heard nothing like it.

'I saw her after the play; and was about to congratulate her on her success. "Ah!" said she, "don't you perceive that it ruins me? In all my characters, the costume must now be observed; the truth of declamation requires that of dress; all

my rich stage wardrobe is from this moment rejected; I lose twelve hundred pounds worth of dresses! But the sacrifice is made. You shall see me here within a week, playing *Electre* naturally; in short, as I have done Roxana."

'It was the *Electre* of Crebillon. Instead of the ridiculous hoop, and the ample mourning robe, in which we had been accustomed to see her in this character, she appeared in the simple habit of a slave, her hair dishevelled, and her arms loaded with chains. She was admirable in it; and some time afterward she was still more sublime in the *Electre* of Voltaire. This part, which Voltaire had caused her to declaim with a continued and monotonous lamentation, acquired, when spoken naturally, a beauty unknown to himself; for, on seeing her play it on his theatre at Ferney, where she went to visit him, he exclaimed, bathed in tears and transported with admiration, "*It is not I who wrote the part; 'tis she: it is a new creation!*" And, indeed, by the infinite shades she introduced, and by the expression she gave to the passions with which this character abounds, it was perhaps that of all others in which she was most astonishing.

'Paris, as well as Versailles, recognized in these changes the true tragic accent; as well as the new degree of probability which a strict observance of costume gave to theatrical action. Thus, from that time, all actors were obliged to abandon their fringed gloves, their voluminous wigs, their feathered hats, and all the fantastic costume that had so long shocked the sight of men of taste. Lekain himself followed the example of Mademoiselle Clairon; and, from that moment, their talents excited mutual emulation, and they became worthy rivals of each other.'

The above relation, as given by Marmontel, so perfectly coincides with the views in which this Journal is begun, and will be continued, that a thorough perusal of it, till a perfect comprehension of the practice which it blames, and the true and natural manner it admires, are understood, is most seriously recommended. Why was Garrick so wonderfully great? It was because he had a like strong conviction, or rather feel-

ing, of the true and the false manner. To avoid all possible song, or whine, to deliver the words in the tone and manner of men discoursing with each other under the influence of passion, and to understand all the various and distinct feelings, which the successive words of a sentence must have in the minds of persons who speak such words, were the indefatigable studies of his life. How glorious was the reward!

The inveteracy of habit is such that, even when it is good, it is to be feared. But what is it when bad? It appears as if it could only be eradicated by an indefinite lapse of ages. There is so strong a propensity in the human ear to adopt lengthened sound, to imitate without discrimination, and to be proudly self-satisfied when supported by the authority of numbers, that extraordinary and continual efforts are necessary, to bring it back to recollection and reason. Endless repetitions are necessary to a child, before it can remember the alphabet; but the child is much more easily taught than such persons; for it has no self-satisfaction, no conceit, no false prejudices to conquer. It has much to remember, but it has nothing to forget. Mrs. Siddons is a noble actress! In her impassioned scenes, the man who can listen without frequent surprise and ecstasy must have no discrimination, no feeling, nor any sense of the true dignity of excellence. Mr. J. P. Kemble is too often cold, and declamatory: but he has his inspired moments, which give, perhaps, the greater delight by bursting upon the audience when they are least expected. Both brother and sister, however, are the practical patrons of this hateful recitative, and are therefore theoretically its defenders. Mr. Kemble contends that blank verse demands a recitation peculiar to itself. Can passionate or unimpassioned discourse ever require tones in which it is never heard, except by children repeating the catechism, or their imitators? As a tragedian, Mr. Cooke has the proud honor of being nearly free from this sing-song defect; this puerile school-boy habit of whining out a lesson.

ESSAY ON DRAMATIC COMPOSITION.

(*Continued from No.* III. *p.* 216.)

UNLESS the facts that have been stated, concerning the moral tendency of the drama, can be disproved, it must be admitted that of all the human efforts and known means, by which the most useful, essential, and dignified moral effects may be produced, the drama affords the best and least doubtful. Of this truth churchmen every where seem to have had an imperfect perception. Through all Christendom, there has been a strong conviction of the moral consequences of dramatic exhibitions, since there is not perhaps a story, in the Old or New Testament, which has not been dramatized. That the imaginations of men in darker ages, who have treated such subjects, were not sufficiently chastised; that they often made a very improper and incoherent jumble, in which buffoonery no less immoral than gross and disgusting largely participated; that they pretended to discourse of things concerning which it were perhaps better never to discourse; that they embodied the mystical, gave form and figure to the occult, and alarmed the theologian and the statesman, is only a proof that such subjects were not well understood, or properly treated.

In Spain, the *Autos Sacramentales* were the delight of church and state.

In Italy, likewise, not only the Old and New Testaments, but the Legends of Saints, have afforded almost innumerable subjects for their *Rappresentazioni Sacre*.

In France and England, Mysteries, Moralities, and holy Interludes, were alike frequent: nor is it to be presumed that sacred dramas would ever have been prohibited, but for the strange abuses that were committed, by companies who formed themselves in all the various christian states; where they were guilty of such wanton indecencies and daring outrage against church ceremonies and dignitaries as became insufferable, even in those rude ages.

The tragedy of *Athalie* is still, by many, supposed to be the *chef d'œuvre* of Racine. The story of *Esther* afforded him another dramatic subject. *Le Jugement de Salomon*, three years ago, was a highly popular piece at one of the theatres on the Boulevards, at Paris; and was so affecting that it was translated, with some faint disguise by an alteration of names, and performed at the Little Theatre in the Haymarket. Our present Oratorios are the shadowy remains of sacred dramas. When good sense and good taste shall have made so much progress as to relieve the public from their prejudices, and restrain authors within the limits of common sense, the Scriptures may again afford many most interesting subjects for dramatic composition. This is an opinion which will cause some men to be angry, some to smile, and some to soberly consider. Could the abuse of things prove their destructive tendency, there would be nothing which would not be destructive; for the best of things are daily abused.

Desirous that wise and good men should seriously reflect on the subject, the moral tendency of the drama has been insisted upon, with the hope that the numbers of those who are already inclined to this opinion may be increased, and their conviction strengthened.

Of the art of dramatic composition men have spoken with such authority, from their books, and with such little inquiry or rational self-conviction, concerning the certainty of the rules that ought to be observed, that, it will be deemed a presumptuous audacity to call these rules in question. In this age, the benefit that results from free inquiry will scarcely be doubted: to *search into all things* was an apostolic maxim; and that *knowledge puffeth up* was another. To take rules for granted is easy; to understand them is difficult.

Time, place, and action, are what criticism has called the three indispensable unities. We will begin with time.

It is alleged that the illusion of the scene should be perfect, and that consequently the time of a dramatic performance should be confined to twelve hours. It appears rather surprising that criticism should speak of dramatic illusion as being

capable of perfection. If we reflect on the operations of mind, when strongly excited, they will be found to be multifarious, mingled, and rapid, beyond its own recollection. It cannot itself distinguish the minuteness of the interval of time, in which it can suppose itself at Rome, hearing Marc Antony harangue over the dead body of Cesar, be called to recollection by the noise or elbow of a neighbouring spectator, and again be back at Rome, listening, and connecting the past and the present. Unless there be some uncommon disturbance, or event, its operations are not perceptibly impeded: it is attentive to the tale it hears, the passion of the scene, and the suspense in which it is held. If it be not in an artificial state, perverted by some previous *cold examination*, and influenced by some preconceived rules, from which it has drawn conclusions which, if not just, are no less ridiculous than prejudicial, mind in itself is entirely plastic. When unfettered, it is led implicitly by the narrative, and even delights so to be led; yes, delights in what unimpassioned criticism has so sagagiously discovered to be absurd. It can contemplate a child in the arms of a woman, imagine that woman to be a court lady, and the child the daughter of a king and queen; can suppose it to be exposed in a desert, saved by a shepherd, grown up to the age of puberty, in reality a princess, but in appearance a shepherd's daughter; and can readily believe so beautiful a creature is beloved by a prince, and at last restored to the arms of a jealous king, who was called Leontes. Such is the nature of mind that, even while reading what is here so briefly written, all this has been supposed. These facts are not to be denied: nor the pleasure the imagination takes in thus indulging its flights. Why should these pleasures be restricted or entirely destroyed by rules which, pretending to correct absurdity, are themselves absurd? If twelve hours are allowed to be necessary to the fable, in the general composition of a play, why should twelve years be denied? The time of performance is two hours and a half. To the mind in such a state, minutes and years are words, that are only so far important as they lead the mind to perfectly understand the story: to every

thing else, if unprejudiced, it is totally indifferent. But the spectator, who has been gravely informed, with an assumption of dogmatical superiority, that a child cannot grow up to the state of woman in two hours' time, is struck with so important a truth, and goes to the theatre highly self-satisfied at the acquisition of such essential knowledge.

It is to be regretted that the critics, who made this miraculous discovery, though Aristotle, alas, be at their head, had not with equal phlegm more maturely considered the nature and the powers of imagination.

All dramatic compositions are an appeal to the mind, which they are solely intended to occupy. The actors, or persons supposed, are but shadows, seen by it *as in a glass*. Time and space are entirely relative words. Time is but the instant of consciousness, and space the limits of sight. On the associations, the recollections, of mind the dramatic art is founded. Since it can combine and multiply them so rapidly, since it can be affected by them with such supreme pleasure, or pain, is it wisdom, nay is it not absurd and destructive to the dramatic art, to exclude the poet from the use of the means which these pretended unities would destroy, and which are among the most necessary to the truth and passion of the scene?

So redoubtable has been the voice of long-received criticism that men, the most capable, have not ventured to probe the subject. The late Doctor Johnson, whose name in elegant and sound criticism deserves to be revered, has slightly touched the question, in his preface to the works of Shakspeare; but he honestly avows his timidity, at only daring to doubt of rules, which have so long been received and applauded. It will be easy to show that they never were, and never could be, obeyed; and men, who are more willing to endure the opprobrium of not being orthodox critics, will venture to be more rash. There is no great danger, perhaps, in the present case; for the high priests of prejudice are daily less numerous, and the victims sacrificed to the fanaticism of former ages are few.

(To be continued.)

SOME ACCOUNT

OF THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE GERMAN STAGE.

(*Continued from No.* III. *p.* 218.)

COMIC operas first made their appearance, in 1752, in Germany, where they have been highly successful. Originals, translations, imitations, good and bad, are now all of them abundant. The first opera performed by the company of Koch was an imitation of *The Devil to Pay,* from the English. Weisse was the German author, who, beside the honors he acquired of this kind, is regarded as one of the best dramatic poets in the language. The opera was universally applauded, and is still a favorite, notwithstanding the clamors of Gottsched and his cabal, by whom the piece and comic operas in general were cried down.

Madame Seyler, who now (1782) is reputed to be one of the first actresses of Germany, first appeared in 1755: tragedy and serious comedy were the parts she chose. *Miss Sarah Sampson**, by Lessing, one of the best pieces on the German stage, appeared in the same year. This style of writing became more in favor than heroic tragedy.

The miserable war, which desolated Germany from the year 1756 to the peace, impeded the progress of the theatre. Banished and disdained by most of the provinces, the Muses found no asylum but in the Free Imperial city of Hamburg.

In 1758, the authors of *La Bibliothéque des Belles Lettres* bestowed the laurel on Codrus, a tragedy in verse, by *M. Von Cronegk,* a gentleman of Franconia. The great talent there displayed, as well as in his Olinthis and Sophronia, gave hopes to Germany that this hopeful poet, of 26, would soon reach the summit of fame; but he died, of the small-pox, the following year. He had travelled through a part of Europe, and had passed the year 1753 at Paris, where he allowed he had received

* A tragedy, in the style of Lillo.

much benefit from the great actors and masterly works of the French. He left several comedies imperfect, and a volume of charming fugitive poems. It might have been said, at this time, that some evil genius had sworn destruction to the German stage. *Schlegel*, from whom so much was hoped, also died in the flower of his age: and a youth of genius, perhaps superior to both the above poets, was carried off at twenty. This was *M. Von Brawe*, who, in a piece entitled *The Free Thinker* *, has left a proof of noble talent.

In the course of the year 1759, five volumes of the dramatic works of Weisse, successively appeared, were well received, and secured to their author an honorable place among the favorite poets of the nation, and the creators of good taste. Beside the plan and regularity to be admired in his tragedies, we there find strong situations, scenes well conducted, and characters accurately designed. His style is noble, neither inflated nor vulgar; and his comedies abound in traits of excellent humor. In the latter are found faithful pictures of German manners; and their construction announces a perfect knowledge of the world, and of the theatre.

In 1764 an actress appeared on the same stage, who afterward became its highest ornament: her name was *Brandes*, who is now (1782) the delight of Germany.

DRAMATIC ANECDOTES.

BARRY the actor, who died at the beginning of 1779, and whose name well deserves to be preserved, was perhaps in no part so excellent as in that of Romeo; for which he was particularly fitted, by a superiority of demeanor, an uncommonly handsome and commanding person, and a silver-toned voice. At the time that he attracted the town to Covent Garden, by his excellent performance of this part, Garrick found it abso-

* L'Esprit Fort: the author does not give the German title.

lutely necessary to divide the attention of the public, by performing himself at Drury Lane. He wanted the natural advantages of Barry, and, great as he was, would perhaps have willingly avoided such a contention. This at least seems to have been a prevailing opinion; for, in the garden scene, when Juliet in soliloquy exclaims—

"Oh, Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?"

an auditor archly replied aloud—*Because Barry is gone to the other house.*

Many anecdotes have been told of persons wholly absorbed and lost in the illusion of the scene. A woman in the gallery, when the tragedy of Essex was acted, knowing from the story that Essex must die since the Countess of Nottingham would not give the ring which the woman had seen the countess hide, exclaimed in an agony—*She has got it in her bosom!*

When the School for Scandal was first performed, the behaviour of some well dressed farmers in the pit was very remarkable. During the progress of the skreen scene, their emotions were so strong they could not stand still; and, when Sir Peter was left alone with Charles, they kept whispering and elbowing each other—"He'll have t'other peep!"—'No he won't.'—"The youngster will find her out! He's going! There! Now!"—and when the skreen was thrown down, they hallooed, stamped, and jumped with pleasure.

Mademoiselle Dumesnil, an actress at Paris about the middle of the last century, was performing the part of Cleopatra. In the fifth act, her imprecations are almost horrible: among others she exclaims, in the excess of rage,

Je maudirais les Dieux, sils me rendoient le jour.

I'd curse the Gods, were they to give me life.

"Get to the devil, vile hussey!" exclaimed an old officer, sitting on the front seat of the stage box, and at the same time

giving her a push on the back. For a while, this act of delirium interrupted the performance. When the noise ceased, Mademoiselle turned and thanked the officer for having given her the most flattering mark of applause she had ever received.

At present, while it is so decidedly the fashion to seek admiration and excellence in a state of immaturity, the following anecdote may be aptly repeated.

In the time of Queen Elizabeth, plays were performed by the children of the Chapel Royal, and one boy (Sal. Pavy) *who died in his thirteenth year*, was so admirable an actor of *old men*, that Ben Jonson wrote the following epitaph on him:

EPITAPH ON S. P. A CHILD OF Q. EL. CHAPPEL.

Weepe with me, all you that read
This little storie:
And know, for whom a teare you shed,
Death's self is sorry.
'Twas a child that so did thrive,
In grace and feature,
As *Heaven* and *Nature* seem'd to strive
Which own'd the creature.
Yeeres he numbred scarce thirteene
When *Fates* turn'd cruell,
Yet three fill'd Zodiackes had he beene
The stages jewell;
And did act (what now we mone)
Old men so duely
As, sooth, the *Parcæ* thought him one,
He plai'd so truely.
So, by error, to his fate
They all consented;
But viewing him since (alas too late)
They have repented.
And have sought (to give new birth)
In bathes to steepe him;
But, being so much too good for earth,
Heaven vowes to keepe him.

This celebrated child was an original performer in Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels*, and *Poetaster*, in the years 1600 and 1601.

In the reign of Lewis XIV. an Italian actor, who named himself Scaramouch, was so popular that he saved money enough to buy an estate, and asked leave to return to his own country. Finding himself ill-treated there, he petitioned and was permitted to return. At this, though he was publicly blamed, the public rejoiced, and for more than six months crowded to see Scaramouch again. Molière and his excellent company fell into neglect, the comedians murmured and reproached Molière, on whom they depended as author and manager. "Why don't you write for our support? Must impotence and buffoonery carry all before them? Is there no way to rouse the public to common sense?" Weary of such like reproaches, Molière told them they must retire, like Scaramouch, till the town should wish for their return; but that for his own part he should suffer things to take their natural course: the public would not always be Scaramouch mad; they would be tired with bad things as well as with good. Molière had sagacity, and was a true prophet: the very next comedy he wrote the concourse was drawn to his house, and popularity once again was the friend of merit.

Though a man of so much wit, Molière's deportment was serious, his manners grave, and his taciturnity remarkable; yet on the stage he performed many of the most farcical parts. One evening, being to personate Sancho Pancha, and enter riding on an ass, he mounted behind the scenes, waiting for his cue: but the ass, not understanding the prompter, would not wait; nor could Molière hinder him from making his entrance: in vain did the distressed Sancho tug the halter; in vain he called to his favorite Baron, and his servant maid La Forest, to come to his assistance. Seeing her master on the crupper pulling with all his might, the girl laughed so heartily that she had not the power to move; and Molière was at last

obliged to hold by the side scenes, and let the ass slip from under him, go forward, and act as he should please.

During the run of the comic opera of Cymon, when Mr. Vernon was in pursuit of his supposed mistress Silvia, and came on singing

Torn from me, torn from me, which way did they take her?

A wag in the pit replied in time and tune

They're gone to Long Acre! They're gone to Long Acre.

The house was in a roar of laughter; and Vernon with great presence of mind, as soon as there was silence, sang

Oh, ho, are they so; I shall soon overtake her.

MISCELLANIES.

Provincial Theatres of Wolverhampton, Stafford, and Kidderminster, from the Letter of a Correspondent.

THE theatre at Wolverhampton, though there is much insipidity and want of talent, is yet well supplied, considering its distance from the metropolis. It witnessed the early attempts of a *Siddons*, and a *Kemble*, who have there declaimed, in barns and town-halls, with more than Roman eloquence, to "some quantity of barren spectators:" ready and thundering applause was often the stimulant to exertion, and perhaps the sweetest reward of their labours. The theatre closed on the 7th of March, under the management of *Mr. Hoy*. At the beginning of the season, *Mr. Quick* afforded a prominent relief to dulness; his Scrub, Miser, and Sir Benjamin Dove, are the genuine emanations of rich and irresistible comedy. Our ladies have the rage of appearing in breeches: *Mrs. Aikin in Hamlet, Mrs. Bonville in Douglas,* and a *female Roscius,* eleven years of age, *in Achment.* This custom is subversive of the design, and destructive of the interest, of the stage. The pretended Roscius, *falsely and ignorantly* so called, afforded us no-

thing but half-studied shrieks, shrugs, and starts, ill-timed and unnatural.

Cymbeline was performed here; and the king, discovering his children, exclaimed, with ignorance and false emphasis,

"What, am I *mother* to the birth of three?"

And the audience burst into a loud and convulsive laugh. The king and royal family were wholly out of countenance; but, after a pause, his majesty stepped forward, and assured the ladies and gentlemen, he had spoken nothing but the author. The laugh was then repeated, and continued, till another performer came forward and kindly informed us it was a *metaphor!!!* This gave birth to much merriment, and some dispute; for the performers pretended they were accurate: but, had Shakspeare himself been alive and present, hearing the passage so pronounced, he must have laughed. Some of our heroes, when they die, have such a lively method, there is scarcely room for them, on our small stage.

Since *Mrs. Harlowe* left this theatre, Mrs. Aikin is our best performer. Her comedy is preferred: in her tragedy, there is too much studied artifice; nor has she sufficient variety, and modulation.

Mrs. Bonville is a great favorite with us: she played Hob in the Well, at her benefit, in a style so natural, spirited, and characteristic, that it might have done credit to any theatre in the kingdom.

We have few other performers that deserve to be mentioned, *Mr. Shuter* and *Mr. Archer* perhaps excepted. The first is young, and, with an assiduous cultivation of his talents, may expect fame in his profession. Mr. Archer, though not correct, is deserving of notice.

The young Roscius is to perform at this place in July.

STAFFORD.

Mr. Steven Kemble performed Falstaff here, a few nights, in the Christmas holidays. *Captain Stanton* is the manager; but the claims of his company, on the score of merit, are few;

and, most probably, its members are not ambitious of being particularized for their bad qualities. Vulgarity of physiognomy is rather too common among them, and often so striking and uncontrolled as to be that which

"No wig can soften and no rouge disguise."

KIDDERMINSTER.

Though less respectable in its circuit than the former, this company possesses much more ability. *Mr. Crisp*, the manager, is almost universal; but his chief excellence consists in countrymen, boldly delineated, yet natural, and heightened by just and characteristic humor. *Mr. Watkinson* and *Mrs. Egerton* have both considerable merit, and deserve better situations. It is a relief, however, to reflect that the energies of mind are never, perhaps, wholly exercised in vain. Some solitary individual,

"By chance directed, or by fancy led,"

may feel enjoyment, and induce others to enjoy. The provincial Theatres are less an amusement than a pleasant lounge, where the mind may in lassitude indulge, and, like a gentle sea, be moved but not ruffled by the flux and reflux of thought.

A respectable friend has put a tragedy, called *Henry and Almeria*, into the hands of the Editor, of the author of which he relates some interesting anecdotes. This author's name is *Andrew Birrell:* he is an engraver, of some merit in his profession; but is infirm, oppressed by marriage, and pining in poverty. It is true, the tragedy abounds in faults; but it has sufficient pathos and knowledge of the human heart to prove that the talents of the author only require that cultivation which reading and books might bestow, in order to render him well worthy of public support. To inform the world where indigent genius languishes, for protection, is a melancholy duty. The tragedy is sold by Longman and Co.

The Editor presumes he may likewise safely recommend a comedy, in three acts, which has never been performed, but which is published, and entitled *Custom's Fallacy*. He is acquainted with the author's name; but, as it does not appear in the title page, imagines it is intended to be withheld at present from the public. The piece has its faults, but it has sufficient comic merit to afford very great hope that the author's name may hereafter be known to advantage.

In the performance of Romeo and Juliet, it would be unjust not to notice the uncommon merit of Mrs. H. Johnston. A perfect performance of this youthful, sweet, impassioned, and poetical character will perhaps never be seen: for, even in an actress of the high powers of Mrs. Siddons, before the mind can be so matured as to well comprehend the part of Juliet, the pristine freshness of youth is flown. Mrs. Johnston, however, makes a noble advance to excellence: her voice is so engaging, her manners so playful, her transitions so natural, and the impassioned parts in many places are so truly felt, that she deserves the notice of the managers; for by the public she is already greatly noticed.

It is highly to be regretted that there is no complete edition of the works of that dramatic poet, Mr. Foote, who so long shone the luminary of the period at which he lived, and of whom so little has been said after his death. Since the time of Shakspeare, perhaps no Englishman, *as actor and poet*, has received such great and such frequent applause as the late Samuel Foote: he was indeed the Molière of his age. His theatre was upon a small scale, and it was rather his delight to give an exquisite sketch than a complete comedy: yet many of his pieces show how perfectly he was qualified for that difficult task, but that the nature of circumstances, and perhaps his love of pleasant society, of which he was the soul, enured him to negligent habits. There is an edition, in two volumes, of his works; but few of his very early pieces are there to be found. The following is preserved in the London

Magazine of 1767. Like every thing the author wrote, it abounds with satirical strokes at the times, and especially at the state of the theatres, when pantomimes and coronation processions were so attractive as to make it difficult for genuine comedy to be heard *.

Extract from the Occasional Prologue *in Prose, at the Opening of the Theatre Royal in the Haymarket. Written by* S. FOOTE, *Esq.*

Enter SCAFFOLD, (*the Builder.*)

Foote. Well, Master Scaffold, what's the best news with you?

Scaff. Sarvent, Master, I hope things are as they should be?

F. Perfectly.

S. *Conwenent* and *greable,* and quite *a propoz.*

F. If the public, whose servant I am, are but satisfied, you are sure of my voice.

S. Why, I don't see any fault they can find; the *Orchester* indeed is rather too small.

F. No, pretty well.

S. Ay, at present; but if in the winter you should chance to have Oratoris, you will scarce have room for the *Hapsichol.*

F. Oh! that may be easily altered.

S. True. Well, Master Foote, let us now talk a little of business.

F. Oh! the deuce!

S. A pretty long account——here it is. [*Shews the bill.*

F. Very well; but why do you bring it to me?

S. To you! to be paid, to be sure.

F. I pay you!

S. Without doubt.

F. No, there you are mistaken, my good Master Scaffold, you are much better off; it is these ladies and gentlemen who are to be your paymasters.

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* If any correspondent can indicate sources of information concerning the life or early writings of this poet, the editor, and perhaps the public, will be highly gratified.

S. What, the gentlefolks above and below?

F. Ay, the whole public; for, if they don't, I am sure it is out of my power.

S. Why, I can't say, but my security is mended; that is if so be as how they be willing—but—ah!—this is one of your skits, you will never leave off;—but come, Master Foote, you should not be long winded, consider what expedition we have made; all this work here in three months, a tight job, Master Foote.

F. And you, Master Scaffold, claim much merit from that?

S. To be sure.

F. Look into the pit.

S. Well, I do.

F. I will undertake that less than half that number of hands shall undo more work in an hour, than you can complete in a year.

S. May be so; I see there is amongst them some tight likely lads: but come, Master, let us now be *serus* a little.

F. Upon my word, I am serious: I consider myself as a trustee for the public, and what their generosity bestows upon me I will most justly assign over to you.

S. Ay, why then, since that is the case, let us hear a little of how and about it: well now, and what scheme, what plan have you got, to give a jog to the generous?

F. Why, I have some things they have lik'd, and others that I hope they will like.

S. What, I suppose men and women, and talking stuff, that you take out of play-books?

F. Of that kind.

S. Ah! pox! that will ne'er do; could you not give 'em a christening, or funeral? or hey! or, ay, that is the best of 'em all; zooks, let 'em have a *crownation.*

F. No.

S. No, why not? why then we shall have 'em crowd hither in shoals.

F. No, no, no, Scaffold:

No long processions crowd my narrow scenes,
Lamp-lighting peers, and mantua-making queens.

S. Why, as you say, that work is little better than *scandalous magnation:* Hey, gad, I have a thought! give 'em a *pantomine:* I likes to see that little patch-coated feller slap one, and kick t'other, and then pop he is out of the window.

F. Nor shall great Philip's son, thro' our crime,
Sully his triumph by a pantomime.

S. Philip! pshaw, I'd never mind Philip, nor any of the family: what harm can they do you? Come do, and I'll bate of my bill;—do, for the carpenter's credit.

F. Your credit!

S. Ay, and to punish the prigmatical poets, for in that kind of work you will have no occasion for them.—There, you know, our trade takes the lead.

F. Well, well, we'll feel a little for the taste of the town; and if no other method can be found of paying your bill—— for we, Mr. Scaffold, may assume what airs of reforming we please; the stage is at best but an echo of the public voice; a mere rainbow; all its gaudy colours arise from reflection; or, as a modern bard more happily says,

"The drama's laws, the drama's patrons give;
"For we that live to please, must please to live."

S. Why then, after all, I find I am in a hobble.

F. May be not; come, hope for the best. Prompter!

Prompt. Sir.

F. Are the actors ready to open?

Prompt. Immediately.

F. Stay, and see the result of this evening:
Consult with care each countenance around,
Not one malignant aspect can be found,
To check the Royal Hand that rais'd me from the ground.

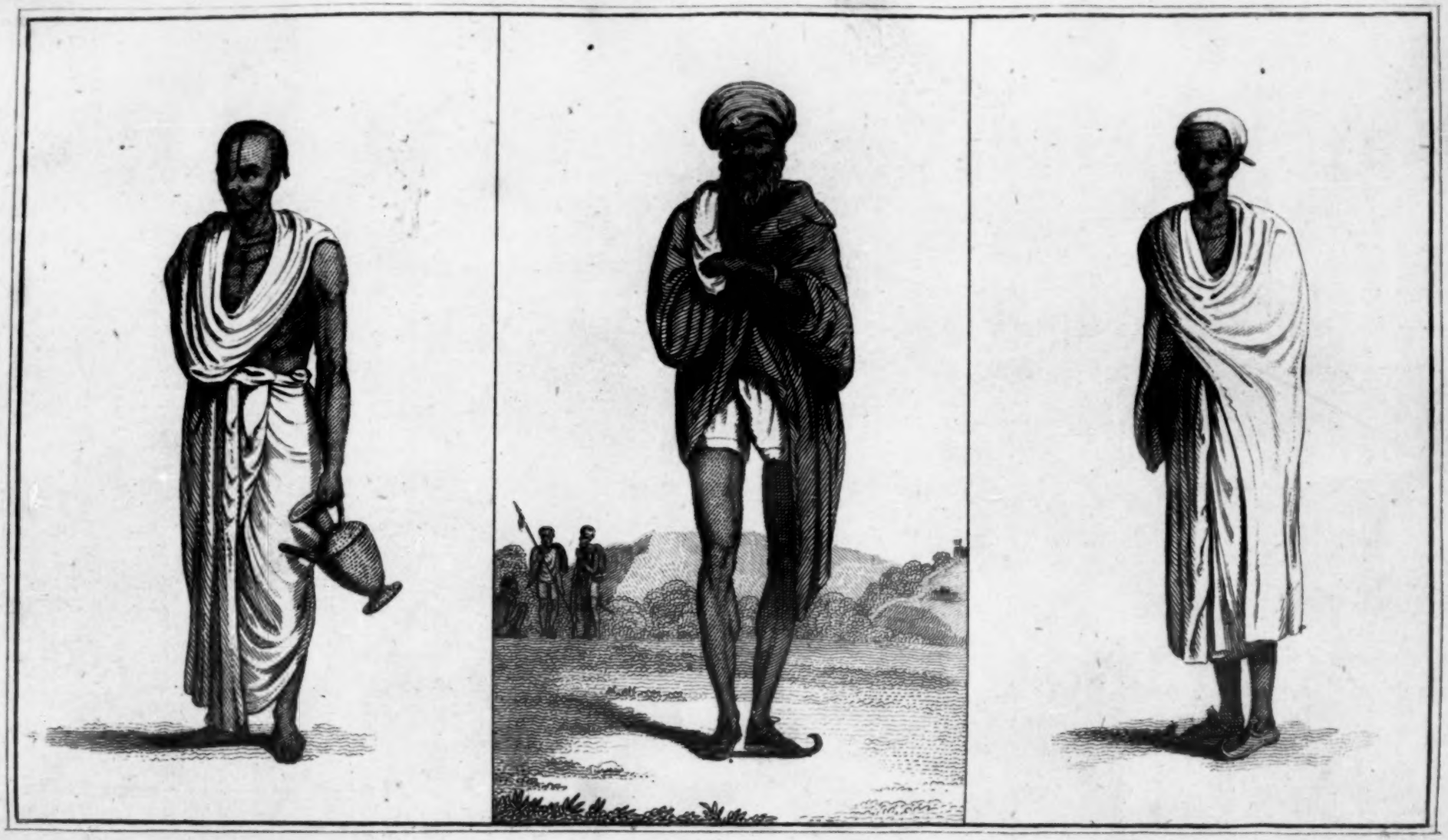
COSTUME.

Though it has not been pretended to give likenesses of the performers, of whom we have given the stage dresses, the like-

J. Dadley sculp.

MASTER BETTY,

Costume of Y. Norval.



A Soodder. *A Sic.* *A Sudsopê.*

ness in every instance, perhaps, has been as great as when such things *have* been pretended, in monthly journals. The figure and appearance of Master Betty, with a profile view of his face, though far from perfect, are yet as similar as most of the prints that have been multiplied upon the town. The sketch, taken while seeing him in character, was intended to convey an idea of his dress, demeanor, and person; and this end has been obtained.

Of the Indian costumes, those of the Soodder, the Sic, and the Sudsopê, are given in the present number. The Soodder, according to the religion of the Hindoos, is prescribed to serve the other classes, in handicraft and menial offices: the print represents him as a servant to a priest.

The Sic is in his family dress. An account of this curious tribe, given of them by Mr. Wilkins, is inserted in the first volume of the Transactions of the Asiatic Society. In the back ground they are here seen armed as soldiers.

The Sudsopê is represented as in the employment of a Godown, or warehouse Sircar.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The Editor acknowledges the satisfaction he receives to find that J. C. T. and the Subscribers in general, as far as he can collect their opinions, are satisfied with the plan, and execution, of The Theatrical Recorder.

He is particularly indebted to the Gentleman who has furnished this Number with an Account of the Theatres of Wolverhampton, Stafford, *and* Kidderminster.

A Sudsopé.

A Sic.

A Soodder.

MONTHLY LIST, FOR MARCH, 1805.

DRURY-LANE.

FEB.
28. Lovers' Vows (Young Roscius) - The Wedding Day.
MARCH
2. Douglas (Young Roscius) - - - The Devil to Pay.
4. Romeo and Juliet (Young Roscius) The Irishman in London.
5. The Honey Moon (by Command) The Lady of the Rock.
7. Romeo and Juliet (Young Roscius) The Devil to Pay.
9. Douglas (Young Roscius) - - - - Of Age To-morrow.
11. Barbarossa (Young Roscius) - - The Anatomist.
12. The Honey Moon - - - - - - - The Lady of the Rock.
14. Hamlet (Benefit of Roscius) - - The Wedding Day.
16. Ditto - - - - - - - - - - - - - The Lying Valet.
18. Ditto - - - - - - - - - - - - - Two Strings to your Bow.
19. The Honey Moon (by Command) Matrimony.
21. Douglas (Young Roscius) - - - The Citizen.
23. Hamlet (Young Roscius) - - - - Who's the Dupe?
25. Romeo and Juliet (Young Roscius) United Britons, and the Virgin Unmask'd.
26. The Beaux Stratagem - - - - - The Lady of the Rock.
28. Douglas (Young Roscius) - - - - United Britons, and the Devil to Pay.

COVENT-GARDEN.

FEB.
28. To Marry, or Not to Marry - - Out of Place, or the Lake of Lausanne.
MARCH.
2. Ditto - - - - - - - - - - - - - Ditto.
4. Ditto - - - - - - - - - - - - - Ditto.
5. Ditto - - - - - - - - - - - - - Ditto.
7. Ditto - - - - - - - - - - - - - Ditto.
9. The School of Reform - - - - - Ditto.
11. To Marry, or Not to Marry - - Ditto.
12. Ditto (by Command) - - - - - - Ditto.
14. Ditto - - - - - - - - - - - - - Ditto.
16. The School of Reform - - - - - Ditto.
18. To Marry, or Not to Marry - - Ditto.
19. The Blind Bargain - - - - - - - Ditto.
21. The Cabinet - - - - - - - - - - Raising the Wind.
23. The School of Reform - - - - - Out of Place.
25. Richard III. - - - - - - - - - - Ditto, *changed to* The Review.
26. To Marry, or Not to Marry (by Command) - - - - - - - - - Love à la Mode.
28. The English Fleet - - - - - - - Honest Thieves.